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Chronicles

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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James Stockdale on POW Ethics

Russell Kirk and Aileen Kraditor on the Perils of Ideology

William Donohue on Rights Gone Wrong

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Bureaucratic Absurdity Quiz

So you think you know the Washington bureaucracy? We've lifted these questions from some of the lunacies reported by George Roche. How many blanks can you fill in? (Helpful hint: when stuck on an answer, say something crazy. This will put you in the ballpark, at least.)

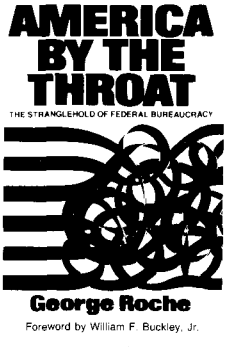
1. _____ spent $_____ studying stewardesses and determined that their noses average 2.18 inches long.
2. The Pentagon spends $_____ to make a grilled cheese sandwich.
3. The FDA issued an urgent warning about valentine candies. What was the thrust of this emergency declaration?
4. How much would environmental testing of a zero-gravity toilet cost?
5. What would a complete study of frisbees cost, roughly?
6. On April 29, 1981, an ordinary day in the bureaucracy, the U.S. government spent $_____ for goggles.
7. Name the august body that voted unanimously to prohibit the importation of killer bee semen. (Problem, points out Roche: no one knows how to obtain killer bee semen.)
8. Not counting the military arm, what is the cost of the federal bureaucracy, annually, per person in the U.S.?

AMERICA BY THE THROAT
The Stranglehold of Federal Bureaucracy

by

George Roche

President, Hillsdale College
Former Chairman,
National Council on Educational Research



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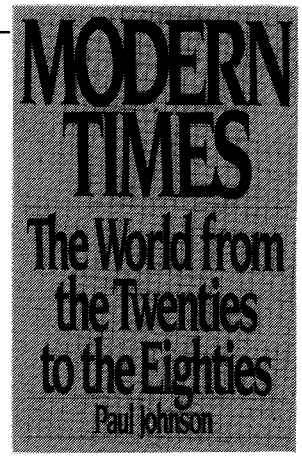

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How do you score on men and events?

Fill in the blanks with the people Paul Johnson is referring to:

"The _____ invasion [of Washington], one visiting statesman observed, was 'like watching the Borgia brothers take over a respectable north Italian town'." (Page 614)

"In the atomic field Soviet agents included Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. Morton Sobell, David Greenglass, Harry Gold, _____ (alias Alexander Stevens), to whom Whittaker Chambers acted as courier, and Jacob Golos, as well as Klaus Fuchs, who had been cleared by British security." (Page 458)

"Yet _____ was not a statist. He said he was against any attempt 'to smuggle fascism into America through the back door'. On many issues he was a liberal....He did not make anti-Semitic jokes, like Woodrow Wilson and his wife or Franklin Roosevelt. To a very wide spectrum of educated American opinion, he was the leading American public man..." (Page 243)

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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Classicists snubbing Bennett screamed the headline in the *Washington Post* (December 27, 1985). The *Post* went on to reveal that "a special committee of the American Philological Association" had "voted down" a speaking invitation to Education Secretary William J. Bennett. Since the APA is the national organization of teachers of Greek and Latin, and Bennett has long proclaimed the virtues of getting the Greek and Latin classics back into the college curriculum, here was a good case of man biting the hand that feeds him. Eric Gruen, a Berkeley historian on the committee, was quoted as saying that "Bennett holds controversial views on scholarship and education." Most of the rest of the article discussed the centrality of feminist scholarship in the field of classics. As NEH head, Bennett, it turned out, had "denied grant money" to feminist scholars.

The wrath of the *Washington Times* was aroused (December 30, 1985). America's classicists were "maggots on the march," "a mindless horde of shrill polemicists who have hijacked the classics," and Bennett "should declare war" on them.

Something did not ring true, so *Chronicles* called up a few people who knew what was going on. It seems that the American Philosophical Association (APA, again) wanted to invite Bennett to speak at *their* December meetings in DC and asked the classicist APA to join in. It came up at the tail end of a long session of the regular APA Program Committee, nobody expecting any problems. Gruen objected, however, because of Bennett's cracks about students on fellowship vacationing in exotic locations and buying fancy stereo sets. Rather than getting into a lengthy debate at the end of a long day, the suggestion was voted down. A member of the local committee whose name figured prominently in the article leaked the unimportant incident to the *Post*, who blew it up into a classical rejection of Bill Bennett and Ronald Reagan.

The story should have ended there. Young women reporters at the *Post* have received Pulitzer Prizes for stories no more accurate. No sensible person would take their unverified word for anything, particularly *Washington Times* editor Arnaud de Borchgrave, coauthor of *The Spike* and an expert on the general unreliability of America's newspapers. But instead of checking out the *Post* story, Mr. de Borchgrave denounced the most conservative humanists in America. Gruen's stonewalling of Bennett had nothing to do with feminism. Neither his department nor any other top-rated department has hired or is likely to hire a feminist. The charge that NEH denied money to feminists is directly out of an article in *The Nation*, with the source unidentified. It's a trivial matter, really, and in no way detracts from the superbly professional job Mr. de Borchgrave is doing at the *Times*. And, heaven knows, there are enough trendy classicists around. Classics has shared in the general decline of higher education, but as a group, classical scholars are less inclined to the current fads of Marxism and feminism. Their heroes, to judge by the number of times they are referred to and the books devoted to them, include A.E. Housman, who was a dry-as-dust text critic still defending his idol Napoleon III in the 1920's; B.L. Gildersleeve, who devoted his scholarly life to Greek grammar, but rode with Stuart and defended the "Creed of the Old South" in *The Atlantic* deep into the 1890's; and Germany's Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, a great scholar and to his dying day a very strong Prussian patriot. The most brilliant classicist now writing is Basel's Walter Burkert, discussed in these pages in January. The list of excellent scholars and teachers who are not lackeys of the leftist establishment might go on: Sir Denys Page, Hugh Lloyd Jones, Ernst Badian. What got into the *Times*? Answer: They believed the *Washington Post*.

It is an old story. Two examples: (1) In *Rise of the Right*, William Rusher recounts his experiences on the original Draft Goldwater Committee. He tells his friends at *National Review* about the Goldwater movement, and they do not care. It is only when the story appears in the *New York Times* that they believe it; (2) J.R.R. Tolkien wrote his son about C.S. Lewis the night they met Roy Campbell, "Nothing is a greater tribute to Red propaganda than the fact that he [Lewis] (who knows that they are in all other subjects liars and traducers) believes all that is said against Franco, and nothing that is said for him." This particular Pied Piper has been uncovered so many times. We shall never be free until we stop dancing to his lying jig.

Accuracy in Academia is causing a stir in the ranks of liberals and conservatives. The academic left naturally suspects the motives of conservative students determined to spy on their unconservative teachers, but even Midge Decter has recently issued a polite but firm protest against telling tales out of school.

It is, admittedly, a difficult question in which the tradition of academic freedom has to be balanced against a justifiable disgust with irresponsible faculty. Frankly, we wish the question were not posed as a matter of right and left. We remember all too well an art teacher wasting class after class warning against the red menace—he wouldn't allow a pure red in any painting; or the conservative historian who worshiped aristocracy and regaled classes with annotations on his family tree.

Of course, most professors are left of center, but it is not their politics *per se* that are the problem. We would be delighted to have our children studying American history under Eugene Genovese, a Marxist, or philosophy under John Rawls, an orthodox liberal. A good mind in search of truth almost never poses a problem, but a good mind can be hard to find. The

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population explosion of academics in the 50's and 60's operated along the lines of Gresham's law: bad minds drove out good. The real problem with universities is the degree to which disgruntled semi-literates take out their frustrations on their students. In this "revenge of the nerds," anti-American diatribes play a prominent part. We can remember any number of students coming up shyly after lecture and confessing they were fed up with leftist professors who liked talking dirty in front of kids. Worse, the students said they told the professors what they wanted to hear. They had to, if they wanted to get better than a C in the course.

Frankly, we are not worried about AIA. Neither is the American Student Association, which "strongly supports the concept of academic rights for students" and regards AIA as a step in the direction toward truth in advertising. This good old consumerist approach to higher education is nothing new. Medieval university students paid their fees directly to the professors and were concerned to get their money's worth. When they didn't or when they felt the faculty was acting contrary to the students' interest, they rioted. Petrarch became involved in a famous student riot in Bologna.

If a vigorous and obnoxious student body can result in another Petrarch or a St. Thomas, then no one should have anything to fear from a responsible and orderly outfit like AIA; not the taxpayers, not parents, and not the many good and honest intellectuals —liberal and conservative—left on the campuses. As for the scruffy little characters that got stuck in a time-warp back in 1969, they've always been afraid of everything, including freedom. Even if they had "academic freedom," few of them would know what to do with it.

The litigation explosion is sending shockwaves through American life. In 1984, one out of every 15 Americans filed a lawsuit, and the trendline is upward. Going to law may soon replace baseball as the national pastime. Because of the skyrocketing number and size of liability claims, insurance companies have lost billions in recent years—$1.5 billion in 1984 alone. In an effort to cut their losses, insurance companies have been frantically raising their rates or reducing their liability coverage. A study last year showed that American manufacturing companies already pay 20 to 100 times more for liability coverage than their European and Japanese competitors, a disparity cited by some business leaders as one reason for the trade deficit. Some businesses—from roller-skating rinks to vaccine manufacturers—have been forced to close their doors because of liability claims and costly insurance. After watching the rates for malpractice insurance climb off the chart, some doctors have opted for early retirement; others are avoiding risky procedures—like delivering babies —while the rest pass on the increases to their patients. Taxpayers in many states and cities face much higher taxes because of the escalated insurance rates and because of liability awards against the local bus system, high school football program, or street sweepers.

The only group benefiting from all this litigation is the lawyers themselves. Even successful plaintiffs receive only 37 cents out of every dollar awarded in the average liability case, according to a recent Rand study: lawyers take the rest. No wonder public esteem for attorneys is at an all-time low, and "Kill all the lawyers!" is replacing "To be or not to be" as the most quoted line from Shakespeare.

In many statehouses, lawmakers are looking for a vaccine against this epidemic of litigation. In California, new laws cap contingency fees for lawyers and set limits on the "pain and suffering" awards that courts may award. Some state legislators are also rethinking the "joint and several" or "deep pocket" liability laws that make rich corporations and individuals such tempting legal targets. Last year five states (Illinois, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, and Utah) also passed laws designed to protect doctors from frivolous malpractice suits.

The legislative efforts to reign in the courts and lawyers are understandable, even laudable. It remains to be seen how well they will actually work. The California Supreme Court recently upheld the new cap on lawyers' contingency fees—to the outrage of trial lawyers. But in Illinois, a circuit judge has already struck down the state's new malpractice law as an unconstitutional abridgment of plaintiffs' rights. Similar challenges may be expected elsewhere. Even with the help of sympathetic judges, the new legislation may accomplish less than its authors hope. Few state legislators and even fewer Federal judges are willing to view the upsurge in litigation as symptomatic of deeper cultural discontents. A shot of legislative cortisone may suppress the symptoms for a time, but it will not cure the disease.

Among the root causes of the litigation explosion, few are more important than the erosion of those loyalties that once made it possible to resolve disputes within the family, neighborhood, or community, without running to a lawyer or a judge. It was not just the bar association's idea to increase the number of divorce lawyers in America from 700 in 1975 to *11,000* in 1985. Not long ago, *The New Republic* found it ironic that "insurance and litigation—social institutions intended to produce economic stability and social justice are producing instability and chaos instead." *TNR* noted that "the ironies are particularly apparent" in the day-care business, where the increased cost of liability insurance is hampering the growth of "a crucial industry . . . at a time of unprecedented demand." But it is hardly an irony that the dissolution of family integrity—nowhere more apparent than at a day-care center—has led to lawsuits. Litigation was rare in the days when mothers cared for their own children and when the only insurance people needed was the knowledge that if a husband died or a home burned, relatives, neighbors, and community would all be there to help. The sundering of the ties of family and community has left loose ends, some of them temporarily secured in the weak knots of business relationships, the rest hopelessly snarled. Lawyers multiply rapidly in the confusion.

Accompanying the decline in family and community loyalties has been a perilous slide in voluntary ethical commitment at every social level. It is bad enough that many judges and lawyers now seem to have no conscience not spelled out in the statute books (two years ago, a Federal appeals court ruled that the Constitution re-

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quires lawyers to assist clients who wish to perjure themselves). But millions of other Americans have likewise lost any sense of right and wrong not enforced by the judge and policeman. In his 1978 Harvard Commencement Address, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn complained that in America "voluntary self-restraint is almost unheard of: everybody strives toward further expansion to the extreme limit of the legal frames." When voluntary self-restraint collapses, the coercive force of litigation will inevitably take its place, and no amount of legislation can set things right.

Avaricious and power-hungry lawyers and their greedy clients do offend the moral sensibilities of the majority of Americans, and appropriate legislation may abate the current litigation crisis to some extent. But to the degree that litigation fever is but one symptom of a cultural disease afflicting the populace at large, the place to look for remedies is not the statehouse but the home and the chapel.

The death of Rick Nelson comes as a deferred punctuation mark to the decade of the 50's. An entire generation of Americans grew up watching David and Ricky grow up. We discovered Elvis and Jerry Lee Lewis at the same time, and when Ricky picked up the guitar and sang rockabilly music, we listened. Of course, it wasn't the real thing—Ricky singing a Jerry Lee Lewis song was a little like Guy Lombardo doing Beethoven. He just stood there moving his lips as if he were almost afraid of the music. Still, it was reassuring for suburban and small-town Middle Americans: If Ricky played rock 'n' roll, how bad could it be?

In the 1960's we parted company. Ricky—now Rick—went Western, while the "kids" went to pot. When 50's nostalgia became the rage in the early 70's, Nelson surfaced again (he'd kept working all those years), and he played the big revival concert at Madison Square Garden. It was not a good experience, although ironically it produced his only really good song, "Garden Party," in which a grown-up Rick Nelson declared, "If memories were all I sang / I'd rather drive a truck."

Nelson went on singing into the Reagan years, in some ways a replay of the Eisenhower years. He went back to his first love, rockabilly music. When he died in a plane crash, he was on his way to another job. The crash now appears to have been caused by someone freebasing cocaine. Time finally caught up with the relic of the 50's rock. Hank Williams killed himself with booze and pain pills; Jerry Lee Lewis has almost drunk himself to death more than once; Elvis tranquilized himself to destruction. But for the middle-aged and middle-class Rick Nelson, the cause of death was all too appropriate.

The sanctuary movement continues to stay out of the news. By now everyone has heard of the heroic efforts of American churches willing to risk punishment in their zeal to obey a higher law. More interesting are some of the things the press is *not* telling us. We are told, for example, that illegal immigrants deported to El Salvador face political persecution. Evidence collected by the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration suggests the contrary. Since December 1984 ICM has assisted 5,000 deportees by providing lodging, meals, and travel tickets. They also give the deportees six letters, which they are to complete and return to ICM. In the letter they are requested to indicate if they are working, where they live, whether or not they have any health problems or any other problems for which they would like ICM assistance. Of the only 22 who wanted help, two wanted to escape the draft, seven were in circumstances that ICM felt justified emigration. It seems clear from their survey that deportees are not endangered by returning to El Salvador and that their main reasons for coming to the U.S. are economic.

When Central American illegals are adopted by Churches, they sometimes prove to be more than a handful. They are involved in at least one celebrated murder case, and there are rumors that Quaker sanctuary workers are appalled by the alcoholism, wife-beating, shoplifting, and assault engaged in by their wards. One church is reported to have solved its problems by passing them on to another congregation, whom they duped into thinking they were getting paragons of virtue, only to receive another lot equally bad. Religious groups now prefer church sanctuary, because they are apparently afraid to let the illegals into their homes. Safely locked up in church, the immigrants are also prevented from engaging in street crime. Still, the sanctuary churches continue to bask in the glow of public attention and speak grandly of doing the Lord's work. Jesus made an appropriate observation on going public with generosity:

> When thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

Verily.

Irving Kristol has come a long way in his perilous journey from the left. While some of his "fellow travelers" on the trip have been tempted to stop at certain comfortable resorts —democratic socialism, Zionism, or even democratic capitalism—Kristol's intellectual restlessness continues to spur him on in search of a genuinely American vision. Most recently he has shown signs of accepting certain premises which once found favor with T.S. Eliot, Charles Péguy, and the Falange Espanol. Writing in *Commentary*, he observes, "It is not mass democracy that makes modern societies less habitable than anticipated, it is secular, 'progressive liberalism,'" which he describes as "the religion of our elites . . . but *not* the religion of a majority of the American people."

In looking for a new consensus in the West, Kristol thinks it will be built on three pillars: "a commitment to economic growth as measured by jobs and economic opportunity for the average person," patriotic nationalism, and religious morality. Kristol, a professor of social thought at NYU, is not entirely sure he wants to live in a world designed by William Jennings Bryan in consultation with Jose Antonio, but that makes his penetration even more remarkable. If we went in for charting careers on the basis of left/right polarity (which we would never do), we would have to put Mr. Kristol somewhere to the right of Jerry Falwell. cc

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CONSPIRACIES AGAINST THE NATION

by Thomas Fleming

The Reagan Administration's Baby Doe policy is finally being tested in the Supreme Court. Supporters see the law as a necessary guarantee of the rights of handicapped infants whose lives are threatened by selfish parents and amoral physicians. The Federal government has a positive obligation, they insist, to send investigation teams—Baby Doe Squads, as they are called—into hospitals whenever a baby with birth defects is reported to be suffering neglect. The American Medical Association sees the matter in a different light. Nearly every state has laws on the books leaving such difficult decisions up to parents and, to a lesser extent, physicians.

What exactly is going on? The arguments sound like a chorus of Humpty Dumptys whistling "The World Turned Upside Down." The AMA has always stood up for the privileges of their order in questions of health care, often at the expense of the rights of ordinary citizens and families. Is a lobby of the rich and powerful suddenly going populist? Are their lawyers going to argue that state and local laws cannot be infringed by the Federal government in its relentless pursuit of equal rights? And the conservatives in the Reagan Administration and the right to life movement, have they suddenly discovered that government intrusion into private life is a good thing and that their compassion overrides the larger constitutional and ethical questions involved? Do they really believe that they have tamed the wild horses of the bureaucracy, that they can harness them to their wagon and make them trot like Tennessee pacers?

The Administration seems to believe that parents of deformed babies can't wait to get rid of them. In some extreme cases, perhaps they are right, but if we actually are so far gone as a people that we are willing to kill infants with impunity, it is hard to see what good can be done by Baby Doe Squads. If anything, they will only serve to exacerbate the parent-child tensions of a society that has already stripped families of most of their traditional privileges. Whatever the Court decides, the Baby Doe policy raises a number of urgent questions about the direction of the conservative movement in the next few years. With the left in almost complete disarray, the time may soon be at hand (if it is not already here) for conservatives to lead America back to some kind of consensus on the great issues that have divided the country since Eisenhower left office. Conservatives saw Ronald Reagan's election in 1980 as the first step in a revolution. Many saw the President's successes in 1980 and 1984 as a vindication of William Rusher's and Kevin Phillips' predictions of an emerging Republican majority. This majority, based on a coalition of businessmen and populists, would restore our pride, bind up the wounds inflicted in the 1960's, and reunite us as one nation "from sea to shining sea."

Conservatives lost no time in giving the President his instructions; he was to turn the clock back to 1956, the high tide of Eisenhower's postwar restoration. When the President failed to live up to their expectations, the cry went up against the king's evil counselors—Jim Baker, in particular. As time went on, the slogan switched to "Let Reagan be Reagan." On the other hand, the President's detractors, principally the left wing of the Democratic Party, saw his success in another light. His margin of victory did not constitute a mandate for anything more than a vague commitment to growth. Mr. Reagan's popularity was strictly personal and had little or nothing to do with what an earlier Republican President had termed "a return to normalcy."

What both sides are wondering about is: Where do we go from here? Will the Republican Party continue to have a strong conservative flavor, and if it does, who will lead it? Whatever he may be saying these days, George Bush has never and will never share the social concerns of the hard hats and rednecks that put the Republicans in the White House. It is hard to conceive of Bush as a Knute Rockne in the locker room rallying the squad at halftime with his reminiscences of the Gipper. Congressman Kemp, on the other hand, is still only a congressman, almost entirely unknown to the unsanctified hordes who do not subscribe to conservative publications. Many think he ought to try his act out on the road—in the governor's mansion in Albany—before taking it to the White House.

Then there are the Democrats. Will they snap back and reclaim their lost soul by calling up the ghost of Henry Jackson? Bert Lance and Ham Jordan were warning them long before the 1984 debacle that no candidate could win unless he was acceptable to Southern voters. Is the party smart enough to listen? Such questions seem to trouble the editorial staff of *The New Republic* and *National Review* alike.

In the long run, the fate of political parties does not amount to much. Most of them are far more successful than they deserve. In general, they manage to retain a hold on electoral processes only by betraying every principle they are supposed to represent. In 1948 the Democrats turned on party stalwarts in the South and endorsed the progressive Republican position on civil rights. In '64 Lyndon Johnson was the candidate of the party that was going to keep us out of war. A party's greatest victories are always *over* a significant portion of the nation, and in most cases it is a question of "dishing" the opposition, in Disraeli's phrase,

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by adopting their views. The Administration's rhetoric on the rights of handicapped infants is only the most recent example of a conservative adopting liberal slogans. It is hard not to endorse Halifax's assessment of the best political party as "but a kind of conspiracy against the nation."

Most conservatives prefer Edmund Burke's more generous view of the party system as an instrument of good government that transcends the level of personalities. But, in Burke's view, parties represented the great constituencies of the nation: they were neither an ideological faction—like Communists or Jacobins—nor a mere historical accident like the 20th-century Democrats in America—Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion, as their opponents were fond of saying. What the two parties represent now, it would be difficult to say, when Lowell Weicker is a Republican and Sam Nunn a Democrat. Many Southern conservatives retain their loyalty to the party of Jefferson Davis—Tip O'Neill had to *drive* Phil Gramm out of his own party and turn him almost overnight into a powerful Republican senator. But if the Democrats drift inexorably to the Center, it will become even more difficult to make a clear distinction on the basis of ADA or ACU ratings.

If there is a powerful "party" with a shared set of commitments, it is probably the conservative movement. But good conservatives have not liked to regard themselves as a party. They prefer to remain a part of "the silent majority." Outside of Washington, most conservatives pride themselves on their lack of ideology and their hostility to abstractions. They would rather be good Americans than good conservatives.

This naive variety of conservatism had limited influence before the days of direct mail. Leaders of both parties knew how to touch the right strings to play the patriotic medley of God, flag, and family. At the national level, there has never been a powerful Conservative Party *as such* in American history—not the Federalists, not the Whigs, not the Republicans. As a result, the reactionary sentiments of ordinary Americans were never fairly represented in the Federal government. On issue after issue—environmentalism, family versus the welfare state, abortion, court-ordered busing—popular sentiments have not been taken into account by policymakers.

Increasingly, conservative journalists and politicians have seized upon this disparity and have attempted to form a mass movement on the advice of Burke:

> When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.

There is no denying the movement's success: Mr. Reagan in the White House; two hard-core rightists from North Carolina in the Senate; Phil Gramm in Texas; a significant number of young yuppie congressmen; and just outside the political arena, powerful institutions like *National Review*, *The American Spectator*, and The Heritage Foundation compete with their opposite numbers for prestige and leverage on Capitol Hill. There are countless splits and rifts in the movement—neoconservative versus old right; populists versus elitist Straussians; and among the Straussians themselves, the sect is splintered into fragments that follow Harry Jaffa, Walter Berns, and Strauss only knows who else.

If the splintering sounds a little like the history of the Presbyterian Church, it may be because of an almost religious zeal to save the soul of America. If there is a binding philosophy, it is probably a vague form of the fusionism taught by Frank Meyer to the readers of *National Review*: the uneasy yoking of social conservatives with the supporters of business interests. Despite the haziness of its identity, the movement shows signs of becoming radicalized, and the right sometimes defends its positions almost as predictably as the left.

Consider the abortion debate in the 1980's. There is a rough American consensus: most people favor legalized abortion only when the mother's life is in danger or in the case of rape (or incest, which usually amounts to the same thing). It is not a logically consistent position. If it is wrong to take an innocent life, why is the wrongness mitigated by peculiar circumstances? This consensus—even firmer in the past—was able to function relatively smoothly until the Supreme Court took the law into its own hands and made it illegal to *prevent* abortions. On this issue, conservatives run the gamut, but the extremists usually have their way. The Hatch Amendment would have taken abortion out of the Federal courts and given back the power to the states, but it was—according to reliable sources—torpedoed by a conservative Southern senator with the support of antiabortion purists. Nothing short of an abortion amendment would do.

A number of things ought to be said on behalf of the right-to-life movement. First and most important, abortion is a fundamental moral question that can evoke the strongest feelings. If it *is* murder, then acquiescence in the status quo post-*Roe* v. *Wade* is tantamount to complicity in the Holocaust. Second, it is an issue forced upon the American people by a tyrannical Supreme Court. Third, many antiabortionists are not at all conservative and see no contradiction at all in their efforts to use the Federal government as a weapon in a holy crusade.

Granting all that, there remains the question of what is the best way to stop the killing. Little headway has been made in Congress. More direct action, on the other hand, is headline news: picketing, rallies, and bombing. All of them may be, under the right circumstances, a more appropriate expression of moral outrage than any attempt to impose the will of the minority upon the American people. Actions of the Federal government are at the root of many of our most serious social problems. In the long run, it does not matter who wields the power, because it is inevitably *over* us and eventually against us. I am probably as opposed to abortion as anyone I know. I also don't know of a dictatorship that does not express noble ideas. But mere men are not strong enough to bear the moral burden of deciding what is best for other men.

If there is one point of consensus among the Founding Fathers, it was a healthy distrust of power and those who seek to possess it. If we fail to return abortion to the states, it may even be time for confrontational tactics, but violent rhetoric will only alienate the soft support the movement enjoys. I also am against murder, but still oppose a *Federal* law against it (and the national police it would require).

While conservatives continue to speak of "Federalism"

(continued on page 25)

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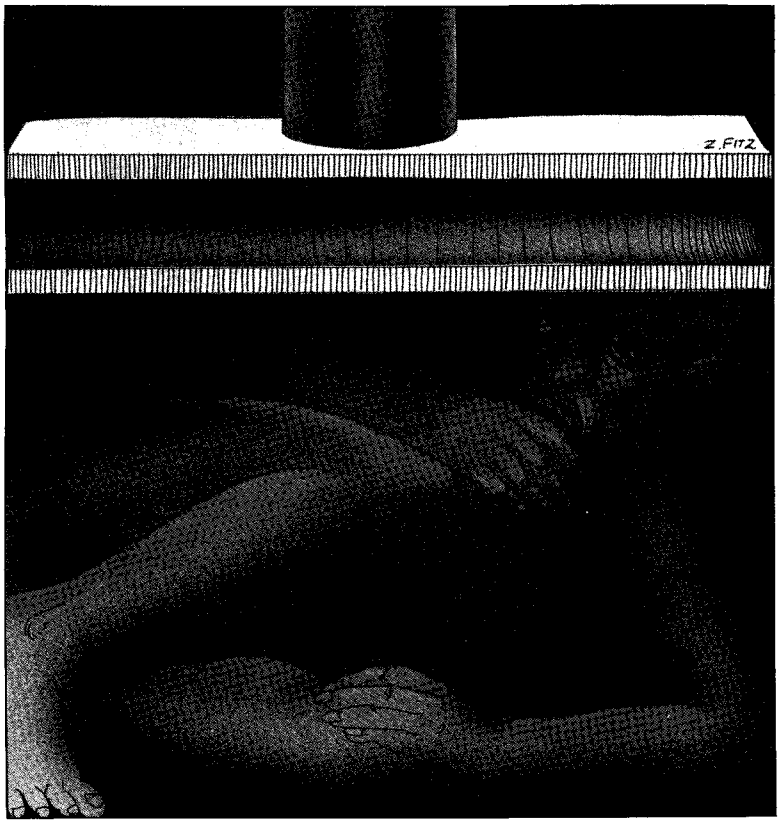
THE "MELTING" EXPERIENCE: GROW OR DIE *by James Stockdale*

I have a friend, a Boston thoracic surgeon, who has a great sensitivity for issues concerning the meaning of life and the nature of man. It's easy to understand how a man who spends the best part of his busy days at the pressure-packed juncture of life and death could become absorbed in philosophical thought. But this doctor doesn't let it go at that. He refines his thoughts through reading and shares the best of his findings of high quality professional articles, those bearing on the human predicament in general and human ethics in particular, with me and a few others. Anyone in the Dr. Eugene Laforet network could expect his colleagues to have some pretty strong notions about ethical systems and their formulation.



Pressurized experiences have a way of giving us an overload of dilemmas that can't wait for a waffled solution. We seem to be continually in the position, described by Dr. Alfred North Whitehead, of not being able to bring half an umbrella to work just because the weatherman says there's a 50 percent chance of rain. When Dr. Laforet gets a person's chest opened up, he has to cut here or cut there in a finite interval of time. He can't waffle. Life seems to become compressed, running ahead, as if being watched on a movie screen, with the projector set on high speed advance.

But in these circumstances, as your attention is channeled, as you concentrate, you can sometimes sense that you're undergoing a "melting" experience. Some of your inhibitions and preset feelings, fears, and biases melt as you come to realize that under the gun, you must grow or fail—in some cases, grow or die. A sort of transformation takes place under pressure—under what the alchemists of the Middle Ages called the "hermetic."

The hermetic idea is old and has come down from ancient Egypt and Greece and was colored by Christian sacramental teaching. It was a two-fold concept. It meant something sealed off—hermetically sealed, as we say. And it also meant magic, particularly magical transformation. You put something in a crucible or a retort, and you subjected it to certain pressures like heat or doses of sulphur or mercury. If you were lucky or wise or both, some kind of creative transformation would take place. In physical terms, this referred to the changing of base metals into precious ones—lead into gold.

But the top grade alchemical philosophers were not content with mere physical crucibles and crystal retorts they could hold in their hands. They were aiming at even more important things. Paracelsus thought it might be possible to create a human being (homunculus) in the laboratory —something people today are again getting uneasy about. The higher alchemy aimed not at mere physical change, but at moral and spiritual transformation. The crucible and retort became symbols of creative growth. Fire and the twin elements sulfur and mercury came to represent the outside pressures exerted upon the human soul in its confined place. In extreme cases, the fire might be of hellish origin. But if the soul in question were strong enough, not mere passive matter, that spirit might undergo an alchemical change—a metamorphosis of the spirit in which the ordinary stuff of humanity could turn into something precious, emerging as if from a tightly sealed cocoon.

Vice Admiral James Stockdale is a Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and author, with Sybil Stockdale, of In Love and War *(Harper & Row). A version of this essay was given as a speech at John Carroll University in 1981.*

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This alchemy comparison may sound farfetched, but it contains a hint of the sort of process of intellectual and even spiritual transformation I'm going to talk about today. A person's ethical notions tend to crystalize in the hermetic. Mine did. The pressure chamber in which my most deeply felt ideas were forged was not a surgical operating room, not a pressure–packed classroom, but a prison cell.

Prisons have been crucibles of both degradation and creative impulse throughout history. Like most pressure chambers, they seem to draw out the very best and the very worst of mankind. Writers have attributed prison inspiration to Boethius, Cervantes, Dostoevsky, Solzhenitsyn, and dozens of other ex-convicts who later made their marks in the world. But, in many cases, the main inspiration was obtained through reflection, through the opportunity their prison experiences provided for uninterrupted thought, time to reorder their lives while languishing.

I have had periods of more or less stress-free imprisonment, even in solitary confinement. A fellow prisoner, a math scholar, once did me the tremendous favor of passing to me (and I mean by that putting it through the concrete wall between us with our tap code, as I memorized it) an arithmetic formula of expansion that, in a remarkably few iterations of such simple form that they could be performed with a stick in the dust, would yield natural logarithms to three or four decimal places. After weeks of thought, I reconstructed the process of going from natural logarithms to logs of base ten. I slowly became the world's greatest expert on the exponential curve; I dusted off the construction of a log log duplex deci-trig slide rule in my head. (No pencils or papers were allowed in the cell; my log tables had to be etched with a nail on the concealed side of a bed board.) I became one of the few men alive to truly understand why any number raised to the zero power necessarily had to be unity, why zero factorially is unity, and so on. I spent months and months in deep concentration and, at one point, could have written a pretty good advanced mathematics text. I knew the logarithmic-exponential picture inside out.

You might find it interesting that after I'd been home about two weeks I was so struck with disillusionment at the contents of a freshly received letter that I almost cried. It was just a short letter from my young son's prep school math teacher with a casual request for a brief, written summary of all it took to build a slide rule in prison. He obviously had devoted very little reflection to the comprehensiveness of mathematical development entailed. I chose not to do it, and I hope you can understand my frustrating dismay with the commonplace insensitivity of this "big easy world of yackety yack," as I sometimes maliciously thought of it those first weeks out. More about disillusionment later.

Those stress-free prison experiences occurred only late in the game—only after the North Vietnamese ceased trying to extort propaganda and other material from us (a heaven-sent reprieve, which took effect only after President Nixon came into office and reversed the previous Administration's misguided policy of keeping known instances of communist brutality against American prisoners secret from the American press). My mathematical thoughts came from the stress-free period. The ethical thoughts came from the period when the pressure was on—extortive pressure, torture pressure—pressure to the limit to get us to contribute to what turned out to be their winning propaganda campaign beamed at the American man-on-the-street, pressure to the limit to get us to inform on one another. These last two ideas were tied together as integral parts of the extortion system.

The central strategy of the extortion system involved not only the imposition of loneliness, but of fear and guilt—fear of pain and guilt at having betrayed a fellow prisoner. We were all in solitary confinement and solemnly warned that any attempt to communicate with fellow Americans, by wall tap, by signal, by whisper (you name it), would be evidence of our ingratitude for "the humane and lenient treatment of Ho Chi Minh." The rules of the game were that such ingratitude gave the North Vietnamese the moral justification for pommeling the communicator while his arms were simultaneously squeezed with tourniquets, shutting off the blood circulation until he submitted. Their system was designed to produce the propaganda and information they wanted, whether the American chose either of the two obvious ways to go: to stay off the prisoner communication tap code network and eventually become so depressed after a couple of years that he would presumably be willing to buy human contact at the price of collaboration with the enemy; or to join the American communication network, that is, to join the American covert civilization, get caught communicating as one eventually did from time to time, and then be put through the standard chain of events. That chain went from torture to submission to confession to apology to atonement. The atonement was of course to be the giving away of prisoner secrets—being an informer in other words—plus writing the old propaganda statement about how he had been guilty of bombing "churches, schools, and pagodas." In theory, at least, we were in a no-win situation.

I think that's enough background to show that we were in a pressurized quagmire of ethical dilemmas. People were trying to use us and have us tear each other apart in the process. From this cauldron were extruded some basic ethical guideposts.

From this eight-year experience, I distilled one all-purpose idea, plus a few corollaries. It is a simple idea, an idea as old as the scriptures, an idea that is the epitome of high-mindedness, an idea that naturally and spontaneously comes to men under pressure. If the pressure is intense enough or of long enough duration, this idea spreads without even the need for its enunciation. It just takes root naturally. It is an idea that in this big easy world of yackety yack seems to violate the rules of game theory, if not of reason. It violates the idea of Adam Smith's invisible hand, our ideas of human nature, and probably the second law of thermodynamics. That idea is: You are your brother's keeper.

That's the flip side of: What's in it for me? If you recognize the first as an expression of virtue and the second as an expression of vice, let Bacon's distinction add relevance to my concentration on adversity: "Adversity doth best induce virtue . . . while luxury doth best induce vice."

I need to tell you it soon became clear that the only way to go—for peace of mind, for mental health if you will, as well as for practicality—was to forget that business about

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lying low and staying out of trouble by not communicating. Everybody had to get on the line and take the torture after being caught because we had a civilization to build, a civilization of Americans behind walls, a civilization of political autonomy that had the courage to responsibly rule itself with its own laws without contact with the parent country or its government in Washington for eight years. (Thank God.)

When I started teaching philosophy at the Naval War College about four years ago, I commenced reading the literature of the Vietnam era and came across a startling essay about prisoner-of-war ethics by Harvard Professor Michael Walzer. This piece appeared about three years before we were released and had as its central theme the sanctity of individual rights and how the individual prisoner had no particular obligation to bother cooperating with fellow prisoners in a clandestine organization because the poor incarcerated soul had enough to do following the orders of the captors. Walzer could not have been more wrong. To ignore a fellow captive in the pressure chamber is to betray him. Anybody who has been there knows that a neighbor in the cell block becomes the most precious thing on earth, a soul who deserves your care and cooperation no matter what the risk. I'll try to explain some of the reasons why.

When you're alone and afraid and feel your culture is slipping away even though you're hanging on to your memories—memories of language, of poetry, of prayers, of mathematics—hanging on with your fingernails as best you can and yet, in spite of all your efforts, still seeing the bottom of the barrel coming up to meet you and realizing how thin and fragile our veneer of culture is, when you suddenly realize the truth that we all can become animals when cast adrift and tormented for a mere matter of months, you start having some very warm thoughts about the only life preserver within reach—that human mind, that human heart next door. You become unashamed to say what you mean when your pal is being taken out for torture for being caught trying to get a message to you. You tap "God bless you, Jerry," or perhaps "I love you, Jerry."

Man's need for his fellows was certainly spotlighted in those intense circumstances. We found ourselves overcoming what is often billed as the natural selfishness of man, even the survival instinct of man, by clinging to ideas like Unity Over Self and the spirit of other similar axioms of our organization. The sting of guilt was taken out of the program by the commonsense expedient of never keeping secrets from other Americans. No matter what we said or were forced to say under torture in the privacy of the interrogation room, we routinely put out the details on our tap code net. This was a natural for tactical defense and expediency, but its fallout in terms of expiation of guilt feelings was golden. We learned that the virtues of truthfulness and straightforwardness had their own reward.

But there was more to being your brother's keeper than being rewarded in a practical sense. J. Glenn Gray, a professor of philosophy at Colorado College until his death in 1977, wrote of that special power of comradeship to overcome man's alleged basic instinct of self-preservation. He made his observations as a foot soldier on the European battlefields of World War II and recorded them in one of his books, *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle*. I was at a convocation at Colorado College (where three of my sons have gone) when the president introduced me to this man and his literature by remarking that Professor Gray was the only serious scholar of recent times to reflect deeply on how men behave in mutually shared danger, mutually shared pressure. His book and my conversations with him the year before he died corroborated what I saw in Hanoi. Gray wrote:

> Numberless soldiers have died, more or less willingly, not for country or honor or religious faith or for any other abstract good, but because they realized that by fleeing their posts and rescuing themselves, they would expose their companions to greater danger. Such loyalty to the group is the essence of fighting morale. The commander who can preserve and strengthen it knows that all other physical and psychological factors are little in comparison. The feeling of loyalty, it is clear, is the result and not the cause of comradeship. Comrades are loyal to each other spontaneously and without any need for reasons. Men may learn to be loyal out of fear or rational conviction, loyal even to those they dislike.

Gray contrasts comradeship with friendship:

> Friendship is not just a more intense form of comradeship. It is its very opposite. While comradeship wants to break down the walls of self, friendship seeks to expand these walls and keep them intact. The one relationship is ecstatic, the other wholly individual.
>
> Nothing is clearer than that men can act contrary to the alleged basic instinct of self-preservation and against all motives of self-interest and egoism. Were it not so, the history of our civilization would be completely different than what it has been.

The question is sometimes asked of those who have been in high stress situations for long periods, "What kept you going?" "What was your highest value?" My answer is: "The man next door."

What about corollaries to this single, simple, old-fashioned idea? First, let's talk about very recent history. How does what I've said track with the way we Americans handled the matter of the hostages in Iran? Did we credit them with that nobility of spirit, that pride of autonomy and self-reliance that generates within a body of people of goodwill united in a common cause under pressure?

I don't think we gave them a chance to generate that spirit. We played with them like rag dolls. We couldn't keep our hands off them, allowing American do-gooders to parade them before TV cameras on holidays, arranging for and executing piecemeal destabilizing early releases. (President Carter worked for and secured through Yassir Arafat of the PLO the parole of some U.S. Marines in the first weeks of the affair—Marines whose duty it was to remain with their embassy in accordance with the Code of Conduct.) In general, we seemed to proceed from the assumption that a captive embassy staff was destined to become not a proud autonomous band, but a bunch of pitiable lost sheep—

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children stranded at the bus station waiting for a parent to come and take them home.

Americans don't seem able to grasp the politics and psychology of terrorism and hostage taking. After the Pope was shot, the papers were full of thoughtful reflections and predictions by informed people. Their message was that this age will be the age of terrorism and hostage taking.

A better explanation of my thoughts on the recent hostage issue was in the *Washington Post* on Sunday, January 25, the day the main body of hostages arrived back in the United States. I entitled my article "Extortionist Theatre." I see this whole scene as a modern art form, a vile art, but like most arts, fed and supported by its audience. Of course, actors are needed, too. In the recent show, America furnished both the actors and the audience. The hostages were on camera, our squeamish President was publicly agonizing and assuring the world and the Iranians that no damage would be inflicted on the theatre, and the American man-on-the-street demanded and got his daily dose of several hours of hostage soap opera. To any outlaw group or government with that natural bent for extortion, this whole scene spelled one thing: gold mine! Just swoop in and grab a group of Americans, get the show in the news, get the hands wringing and the tears flowing, and write your own ticket. Some countries know how to stop this. If you're interested, check with Israel.

A second corollary could also become a public policy issue. How does what I've said track with the well-intentioned suggestion I sometimes hear that goes something like this: You military prisoners went through hell trying to protect information that wasn't worth it and refusing to make statements against your government that were no worse than those Senator Fulbright was making. Let's get smart. Forget the Code of Conduct. Tell the world we've instructed our prisoners to say or write anything they're asked to say or write. That way we would defuse the whole torture and isolation situation.

Let me tell you that the enemy extortionists would really like that solution. With resistance brushed aside, they would just dig deeper and play even more lethal games with fear and guilt. Don't kid yourself into thinking they're going to start with an antiwar statement in a candy store situation like that. More likely, subjects for their first assigned prisoner essays would be: "Why I know that capitalism made my mother a whore" or "Why I believe it is every prisoner's duty to inform on his fellow Americans." In a prison civilization, covert or overt, a person's most prized possession is his reputation with his peers. Right off the bat, dissension would dominate the scene because most good people will just not stoop to self-imposed degradation. At least half would refuse to write anything. Who's going to order them to follow this proposed new U.S. government policy? Are you going to ask the senior prisoner to do that? You would never get me to do that. You can't get out of this predicament by making it optional, either. This oft-heard proposal has an inherent logic that drives captives toward destructive guilt feelings and disunity. Togetherness would go, self-respect would go, and the prison civilization would become an animal farm. It has been said that you can't legislate morality. You can't legislate degradation either. My message on this corollary is: You can't make a good man under pressure finesse evil, no matter how smart it seems.

A third corollary also focuses on conventional smartness. How does what I've said track with the fact, which I generally believe to be the truth: Well-applied torture can eventually make any man give up particular facts that the interrogating ghoul knows he knows. When confronted with this, the smart money guys from the big easy world of yackety yack might say: "When you know your enemy is on a winning wicket, why resist?"; "It defies common sense to resist—save your strength for something important"; or "Don't fight City Hall."

My point is that people of goodwill under pressure and united in a common cause do fight City Hall. (Thank God.) When the cool, rational smart money skeptics challenge the united sacrifice in this example, several answers are possible.

* A practical answer: It's the only way to go in an extortion environment—everybody makes 'em hurt him. The ghouls don't like to have to hurt everybody. They don't like to be reminded of our unity. Furthermore, when you see how frustrated it makes 'em, it makes you like to live with yourself.
* An Aristotelian answer: Man is not a package of on-off switches; he is not at his base some sort of binary computer. Compulsion and free will can coexist. To give up just because you know you can't achieve total success is a form of determinism. I don't subscribe to environmental, genetic, or any simplistic determinism. Will is the thing. Man makes his character here on earth. I am the master of my fate, the captain of my soul.
* My answer: Loyalty to the group. I have a reputation to uphold with them. I can't let them down. They are my country. They are my family. I'm not a kid stranded in the bus station trying to minimize the pain while I wait for my mother country to come and pick me up.

Finally, there is one corollary that falls out of that ecstatic relationship that comes as a surprise to most of us. I'm picking up on the suggestion that I would have more to say about disillusionment. I'm going to talk about how easy it is for a well-intentioned person to commit a cruelty of disillusionment under pressure.

It's important here to interject the fact that we in those prisons were not an unsophisticated group. We were almost all fighter pilots, all had bachelor's degrees, and more than half of us had at least one advanced degree. At least most were sophisticated enough to know that as intelligent people we should be able to cope with tentativeness and commitment at the same time, much as Aristotle would have us cope with the ideas of free will and compulsion at the same time. What I'm saying is that by and large we were able to accommodate commitment unto death and freedom of thought simultaneously. Political or religious orthodoxy was not a requirement for joining the club. But I think we all tacitly agreed that insensitivity and lack of restraint in the expression of destabilizing personal views to others were very poor form.

Nevertheless, I saw unintentional cruelty of disillusionment kill a rare sort of depressed and thoughtful man. You

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would never guess how. It was not messages of gloom, but cheery messages of hope, persistently drummed into him month after month that eventually did him in. He internalized and took seriously those surefire, upcoming release dates. After a number had eventually passed, his mind drifted away, he couldn't hold his rice down, and he died of a broken heart.

After I returned, I found that there are many examples of that in the literature. Some of you may have read the book *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor Frankl, veteran of the Holocaust and a psychologist and lecturer. He says that the big threats to morale in the crucible are not the pessimists, but the incurable vocal and persistent optimists. That being so, think how much more damage gratuitous statements of political or religious dissent could do to people close to the wire. It is easy to forget that, in this age of free speech at any cost.

However, it was not forgotten in Hanoi, probably because we were all so close to one wire or another and so determined—spontaneously determined, ecstatically determined—to prevail, to see each other through, with love, together. cc

REVISIONS

Enlightened Pander

Among the public nuisances who disfigured the literary landscape in Britain last century, William Godwin deserves special recognition. More than anyone, he was responsible for popularizing French radicalism in England during the 1790's. His classic *Political Justice* is a clearly written and effectively argued tract on human perfectibility. Even death, according to Godwin, was a temporary inconvenience arising from our imperfect social arrangements. While God did not exist, men could—with a little effort—become as gods.

But it was not just in political theory that Godwin made his mark, as readers of Peter Marshall's new biography of the man will discover (*William Godwin*; Yale University Press; New Haven). With one novel alone, *Caleb Williams*, Godwin exerted a permanent influence on fiction, pushing the novel strongly in the direction of psychological influence. His later novels, while less successful with the public, were even more analytical and less dependent on plot. For those who agree with Aristotle that the tale is the center of great literature, Godwin's literary influence was even more pernicious than his political theories.

For a brief period, Godwin succeeded in attracting important disciples like Coleridge. Even later, when Coleridge had almost entirely repudiated Godwin's views, the two remained friends. Coleridge had his eyes opened on "the sublime philosopher, the aweful legislator" one evening in 1794, when he dined with the dramatist Holcroft, Godwin, and Richard Porson, the great classicist. It was Porson who dominated the evening. "My God," Coleridge wrote Southey, "to hear Porson *crush* Godwin, Holcroft, etc.—They absolutely tremble before him!" And well they might. Porson was a real scholar and, in his limited way, a great mind, while Godwin, for all his abilities, was a poseur and an egomaniac. Even as a child attending a court session, he was offended by a judge who removed his arm from the bench: "On this action I . . . silently remarked, if his lordship knew what the lad beside him will perhaps one day become I am not sure that he would have removed my elbow."

What the lad was to become was, in turn, a nonconformist minister, an atheist and radical ideologue, the lover and husband of Mary Wollstonecraft, and the biggest cadger in English literary history. He was always in debt and always devising schemes to make himself rich. As a businessman he was as hopeless as Mr. Micawber and as prone to self-deception as Ralph Cramden. Unlike Micawber, however, Godwin was thoroughly unscrupulous in preying upon even chance acquaintances. When the married Shelley ran off with Godwin's daughter (and stepdaughter!), he acted the public part of the outraged parent. Privately he never quit dunning Shelley for larger and larger sums of money. There are names for men who live off the immoral earnings of women, and none of them are very nice. In reading Marshall's account, the reader finds himself actually beginning to sympathize with Shelley, who was a scoundrel, but not entirely a cad.

Peter Marshall has, in fact, written a model literary biography. The story of Godwin's life is well-told, and he has done a good job of integrating it into the larger issues of the time. He is, it is true, far too sympathetic to the old fraud and manages to find excuses for even his most outrageous acts. But the subject is worth a sympathetic reading. Besides, what good is a hostile biography, even to a man's enemies? A sympathetic treatment like Marshall's is in the long run far more devastating.

There is no denying Godwin's abilities or his influence, but his best gift to the world was, in fact, his daughter Mary Shelley. Mary's *Frankenstein*, although clumsily written and obviously influenced by her father's novels, remains a powerful investigation of the Promethean spirit of rebellion she had witnessed firsthand in her father, her husband, and her friends. After her husband's death, she grew increasingly conservative and religious. The daughter of Godwin and Wollstonecraft, the wife of Shelley, she gave the best epitaph on the Romantic spirit as an obiter dictum in a discussion of her children's education. When a friend advised a progressive school where her son would learn to think for himself, she exclaimed, "For heaven's sake, let him learn to think like everyone else." cc

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transaction books

PEOPLE IN SPACE

POLICY PERSPECTIVES FOR A "STAR WARS" CENTURY

James Everett Katz, editor

Forward by Hans Mark

U.S. military strategy, particularly the "Star Wars" scenarios, has generated renewed interest in outer space. The implications for the security of nations on Earth and other emerging space policy problems are examined in this volume. *People in Space* is organized into three sections following an overview by Katz: military activities in space, civilian activities in space, and space as a sociological phenomenon.

The authors treat the human uses of outer space as endeavors wherein ordinary policy and sociological processes take place. They offer perspectives on how space policy ought to be and is being formed. Space policy is a new, often emotionally charged field, laden with conflicting ideas, values, and worldviews.

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James Everett Katz is on the faculty of the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas, Austin. He is the author of *Presidential Politics and Science Policy; Nuclear Power in Developing Countries; Arms Production in Developing Countries;* and *Congress and National Energy Policy.*

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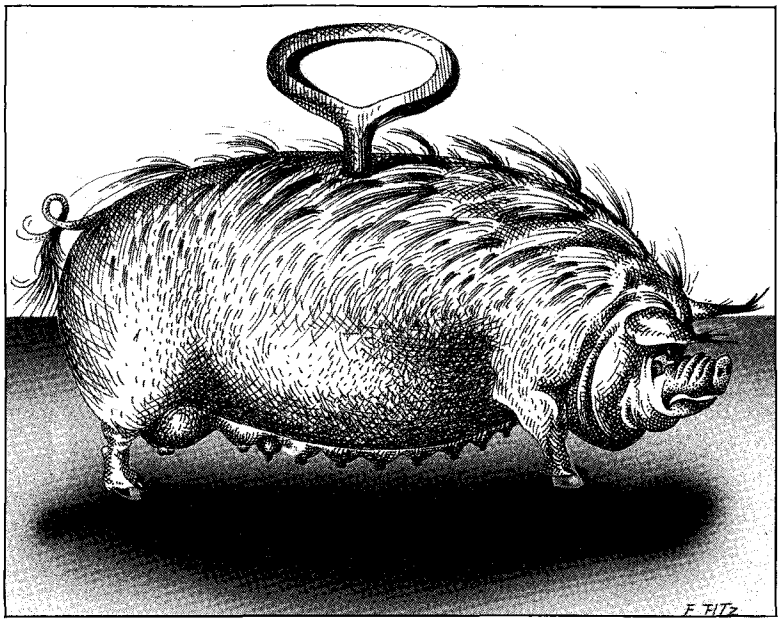
THE UNNATURAL HISTORY OF GIANT IDEOLOGY *by Russell Kirk*

Born in a Parisian coffeehouse during the first year of the 19th century, Ideology has grown gigantic in our time. Infant Ideology was consecrated to an educational reform; the colossus Ideology that now bestrides the world is engaged successfully in the extirpation of culture.

There comes to my mind often, when someone innocently utters such phrases as "ideological framework" and "ideological consistency," a passage in Evelyn Waugh's satire *Scott-King's Modern Europe* (1943). Two British scholars, just arrived in the capital of Neutralia, are being conducted to a cultural congress. Neutralia is limping



toward recovery from the devastation of a civil war brought on by ideological passions; the memorials of that strife lie on all sides:

> The underling leaned towards them from the front seat and pointed out places of interest. "Here," he said, "the anarchists shot General Cardenas. Here syndico-radicals shot the auxiliary bishop. Here the Agrarian League buried alive ten Teaching Brothers. Here the bimetallists committed unspeakable atrocities on the wife of Senator Mendoza."

Aye, the accomplishments of ideology are at once horrid and farcical: Democritus might laugh at them, but there is more than one sort of laughter, and one's sense of humor is sorely tried when the ideologues move in next door. In essence an attempt to thrust down the throats of all humankind a set of abstract political dogmas, ideology continues at this writing to slaughter the masses in Indochina, in half of Africa, in Central America, in Afghanistan —in the name of the masses, of course. The very real Marxist sectaries of the Yemen cast into shadow the imaginary bimetallist ideologues of Neutralia.

No longer is it fantastic to suggest that all civilization may be brought down by furious ideology; nay, that by ideology's frenzy the globe itself may be

> Whirled in a vortex that shall bring
> The world to that destructive fire
> Which burns before the ice-cap reigns.

Since 1914, ideology has undone in many nations all those benefits of humanitarianism that John Stuart Mill and the other Saints of Rationalism expected to tumble from the cornucopia of Rational Progress during the 20th century. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse ride hard in much of the world just now; you know the faces of War, Famine, Pestilence. And who is the Fourth Horseman? Why, Giant Ideology, who commits such atrocities as would have horrified medieval men.

This being so, it is sufficiently amusing—at least it would have amused Democritus and Evelyn Waugh—to find editorial writers referring to "the ideology of free enterprise" or television newspersons instructing us that a "democratic ideology" is lacking in South Africa. It is still more interesting to encounter in Washington lion cubs of the Reagan Administration who seek conformity to an alleged "conservative ideology." And one murmurs *nil admirari* on conversing with certain well-known journalists of advanced years who declare that America and the Free World require their own common ideology to set against Marxist ideology, fire fighting fire.

American confusion about this sinister word—Napoleon Bonaparte, by the way, was the first to call it sinister—began some decades ago. Early in the 50's, a youngish hierarch of the late Moral Rearmament movement published a book entitled *America Needs an Ideology*—that ideology being MRA, naturally. Yet Moral Rearmament actually was no stern ideology, but merely a deliquescent pseudo-religion; and happily it has vanished from this land. Ideologies are made of sterner stuff. Also there have been numerous, and continuing, attempts to create an ideology of American democratism: four legs good, two legs bad, particularly in foreign affairs. Lyndon Johnson's people justified the sending of many American divisions to Vietnam in the name of this ideology of democratism. But what America needs is distinctly not a good five-cent ideology.

John Adams knew this in 1813, when he wrote to a friend of the new term ideology, "Our English words, Idiocy or Idiotism, express not the force or meaning of it. It is presumed its proper definition is the science of idiocy. And a very profound, abstruse, and mysterious science it is. You must descend deeper than the divers in the Dunciad to make any discoveries, and after all you will find no bottom.

A seventh edition of Dr. Kirk's The Conservative Mind *is forthcoming from Henry Regnery Company.*

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It is the bathos, the theory, the art, the skill of diving and sinking in government. It was taught in the school of folly; but alas! Franklin, Turgot, Rochefoucauld, and Condorcet, under Tom Paine, were the great masters of that academy!"

As word and as concept, ideology has been suspect in America and Britain ever since John Adams' time—or at least until very recently, when a good deal of discussion has been stirred up. Among books published on this subject have been Raymond Aron's *The Opium of the Intellectuals* (1957), Thomas Molnar's *Utopia, the Perennial Heresy* (1967), Lewis Feuer's *Ideology and the Ideologists* (1975), Hans Barth's *Truth and Ideology* (1976; originally published in Switzerland, 1945), and Kenneth Minogue's *Alien Powers: The Pure Theory of Ideology* (1985); also chapters by Eric Voegelin, Gerhart Niemeyer, this present writer, and others; also several collections of essays on this theme by various hands. Yet such works appear to have made small impression upon either the intellectuals (as they would style themselves) who have gone over to ideology, or upon the young political activists of various persuasions in the United States.

So let us briefly consider the origin and development of the concept "ideology," with an eye to diminishing the widespread incertitude about its signification. The word has passed through vicissitudes.

The word "ideology" emerges in Napoleonic times. Destutt de Tracy, the author of *Les éléments d'idéologie* (five volumes, 1801-15) was an abstract intellectual of the sort since grown familiar on the Left Bank, the favorite haunt of all budding ideologues, among them in recent decades the famous liberator of Democratic Kampuchea, Pol Pot. Tracy and his disciples intended a widespread reform of education, to be founded upon a science of ideas; they drew heavily upon the psychology of Condillac and more remotely upon that of John Locke. Rejecting religion and metaphysics, these original ideologues believe somewhat naively in a system of natural laws—a world away from Ciceronian or Thomistic natural law, one hastens to add—that could be discovered; and which, if conformed to, could become the foundation of universal harmony and contentment. Doctrines of self-interest, economic productivity, and personal liberty were bound up with these notions. Late-born children of the dying Enlightenment, the ideologues assumed that systematized knowledge derived from sensation could perfect society through ethical and educational methods and by well-organized political direction.

Such is the origin of the word ideology, and in some degree of the present understanding of the concept. In general, ideologues assume that the world can be governed, and perhaps transformed, by the "scientific" application of certain ideas to public and private life. (But those beneficent ideas must not be religious or metaphysical concepts.) Ideologues generally are enemies of religion, tradition, custom, convention, old constitutions; they denounce prejudice and prescription. (This is why, as H. Stuart Hughes wrote early in the 40's, "Conservatism is the negation of ideology.")

But the concept of ideology was altered considerably about the middle of the 19th century by Karl Marx and his school. Ideas are nothing better than the expressions of class interests, as related to economic production, Marx declared. Ideology, the alleged science of ideas, thus becomes a systematic apology for the claims of a class—nothing more.

Or, to put this argument in Marx's own blunt and malicious terms, what has been called political philosophy is merely a mask for the economic self-seeking of oppressors. Ruling ideas and norms constitute a delusive mask upon the face of the dominant class, shown to the exploited "as a standard of conduct, partly to varnish, partly to provide moral support for, domination." (Marx's words to Engels.)

Yet the exploited, too, Marx says, develop systems of ideas to advance their revolutionary aims. So what we call Marxism is an ideology intended to achieve revolution, the triumph of the proletariat, and eventually communism. To the consistent Marxist, ideas have no value in themselves: they are worthwhile, as is all art, only as a means to achieve equality of condition and economic satisfaction. The Marxist derides the ideologies of other persuasions, but builds his own ideology with patient cunning.

Although the most powerful of ideologies today, Marxism is by no means total master of the field. We hear about us the clamors of at least a score of passionate ideologies: various forms of nationalism, negritude, feminism, fascism (a quasi-ideology, never fully fleshed out in Italy), Nazism (an ideology in embryo, Hannah Arendt believed), syndicalism, anarchism, social democracy, and Lord knows what all. Doubtless yet new forms of ideology will be concocted in the 21st century.

Professor Minogue, in the most recent book about ideology, uses the word "to denote any doctrine which presents the hidden and saving truth about the evils of the world in the form of social analysis. It is a feature of all such doctrines to incorporate a general theory of the mistakes of everybody else." That "hidden and saving truth" is a complex of contrived falsifying "myths" about society, disguised as history. (Raymond Aron analyzes the three myths that have seduced French intellectuals: the myths of the Left, of the Revolution, of the Proletariat.)

Ideologues of all brands, from the beginning of the 19th century to the present, promise liberation from present dominations and powers, from present superstitions and prejudices. But when ideologues have triumphed, they have established new despotisms or squalid oligarchies. One thinks of the lines of Robert Frost:

> They say the truth will set you free;
> My truth will bind you slave to me.

In succinct definition, since the Second World War the word "ideology" usually has signified a dogmatic political theory which endeavors to substitute secular goals and doctrines for religious goals and doctrines; and which promises to overthrow present dominations so that the oppressed may be liberated. Ideology's promises are what J.L. Talmon calls "political messianism." The ideologue promises salvation in this world, hotly declaring that there is no other realm of being. This transformation of reality, to occur in time, is to be achieved through the destruction of existing institutions, initially through severe violence.

"Genuine ideologists are intensely theoretical," Minogue

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points out, "a feature which is paradoxical in view of the ideological insistence upon the merely derivative status of ideas. But then, ideologies are, of all intellectual creations, the most riddled with paradox and deception."

Intensely theoretical, yes, the inner circle of ideologues; but employing as their instruments men indifferent or hostile to intellectual pursuits, those "streamlined men who think in slogans and talk in bullets" of Orwell's *Coming Up For Air*, the terrorists of ideological warfare. Because the Marxist ideologue admits the existence of no truth but his own ideology, the terrorist is absolved of crimes and sins that otherwise might trouble even such a man; and thus persons who from an early age felt impulses to destroy, to burn, to torment, to kill are freed by ideology to indulge those appetites from the abyss. One sees the type best, perhaps, in Stefan Andres' story "We Are God's Utopia." Since early in the 20th century, a number of important novels have delineated the ideologue-terrorist for us: Conrad's *Under Western Eyes* and *The Secret Agent*, Wyndham Lewis' *The Revenge for Love*, Gironella's *The Cypresses Believe in God*, and, of course, Solzhenitsyn's fiction.

Ideology, in short, is a political formula that promises mankind an earthly paradise; but in cruel fact, what ideology has created is a series of terrestrial hells. The evidence of ideological ruin is all about us today. How then can it be that the word "ideology," and indeed the concept, too, retain great power in much of the world, and some even in America?

The answer to that question is given in part by this observation from Raymond Aron: "When the intellectual feels no longer attached either to the community or the religion of his forebears, he looks to progressive ideology to fill the vacuum. The main difference between the progressivism of the disciple of Harold Laski or Bertrand Russell and the Communism of the disciple of Lenin concerns not so much the *content* as the *style* of the ideologies and the allegiance they demand."

Ideology provides sham religion and sham philosophy, comforting in its way to those who have lost or never have known genuine religious faith, and to those not sufficiently intelligent to apprehend real philosophy. The fundamental reason why we must set our faces against ideology—so wrote the wise Swiss editor Hans Barth—is that ideology is opposed to truth: it denies the possibility of truth in politics or in anything else, substituting economic motive and class interest for abiding norms. Ideology even denies human consciousness and power of choice. In Barth's words, "The disastrous effect of ideological thinking in its radical form is not only to cast doubt on the quality and structure of the mind that constitute man's distinguishing characteristic, but also to undermine the foundation of his social life."

Ideology may offer attractions to the bored member of what Peter and Brigitte Berger call the Knowledge Class, who has cut himself off from religion and community, and would like to exercise power. Ideology may enchant young people, wretchedly schooled, who are zealous for any cause. And ideologues' promises may win a following among social groups that feel somehow pushed to the wall—even though such people do not understand much of anything about the ideologues' doctrines. The early composition of the Nazi party will suggest the pattern.

By an elaborate propaganda, calculated to destroy faith in existing institutions and in lawfully constituted authority, ideology thrusts out truth and clear perception of reality from the minds of its victims. Once possessed of power, ideologues silence all rival voices. Why permit dissent in Utopia?

The preceding description of ideology and its wiles is concurred in by much serious published analysis in Western Europe, Britain, and the United States—and by the many scholars who have escaped from the Soviet Union and other lands conquered by Giant Ideology. Is this alleged "science of ideas," this substitute for religion, philosophy, and the politics of the possible, what is desired by the advocates of a proclaimed ideology to advance the interests of the United States or of the free world?

Why, presumably the "America needs an ideology" people are advocating something milder than undiluted ideology. They are not asking for fanaticism. No. But that is like expecting a woman to be partially chaste. The great advantage of ideology is the fanaticism it creates, enabling ideologues to sweep away present dominations and powers.

What some people really mean when they call for a "democratic ideology" is a formula for a civil religion, an ideology of Americanism, or of the Free World. (Does anybody suggest an ideology for the United Nations, founded upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?) A trouble with this civil-religion notion is that the large majority of Americans think they already have a religion for themselves, not got up by some department in Washington. If by some subtle process the approved civil religion were designed to supplant the congeries of creeds at present flourishing—why, such hostility toward belief in the transcendent is precisely the most ruinous characteristic of the existing virulent ideologies.

Yet possibly all that is intended by the enthusiasts for this proposed new anticommunist ideology is a declaration of political principles and economic concepts to be widely promulgated, legislatively approved as a guide to public policy, and taught in public schools. If this is all, then why insist upon labeling the things an ideology? (What might be the name for this new secular creed? Democratism? Democratic Capitalism? Sociocapitalism?) An innocent ideology is as unlikely a contraption as Christian Diabolism; to attach the sinister tag "ideology" would be like inviting friends to a harmless Halloween bonfire, but announcing the party as the New Holocaust.

If this "democratic ideology" should turn out, in practice, to be nothing more formidable than a national civics program for public schools, still it would need to be watched jealously. Cloying praise in every classroom of the beauties of democratic capitalism would bore most pupils and perhaps cause revulsion among the more intelligent. And it is not civics courses, primarily, that form minds and consciences of the rising generation: it is the study of literature, rather. What mischief has been done in that discipline is suggested by C.S. Lewis in *The Abolition of Man*. I should not wish to see what remains of genuine humane letters in the average public school supplanted by an official propaganda about the holiness of the American Way or the Free World Way.

During the late 60's and early 70's, I wandered over the

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land, appearing on campuses and television programs in opposition to such ideologues as Tom Hayden, Leonard Weinglass, Dick Gregory, Staughton Lynd, Ayn Rand, Malcolm X, William Kunstler, and Michael Harrington. Such debates foster a distaste for ideological enthusiasms, even among young Americans. Sometimes the element in those audiences most tolerant of my opinions was the local chapter of Students for a Democratic Society. The front rows of seats commonly were occupied by whatever ideological gang of students was strongest on that particular campus—Fidelistas, Maoists, Republic of New Africa militia, the craziest sects from the Academy of Lagado. Once I saw a bazooka being carried toward my lecture hall, and two elderly professors were among the band of the ideologically faithful who bore it.

So I am not of the opinion that it would be well to pour the heady wine of a new ideology down the throats of the American young. If one summons spirits from the vasty deep, can they be conjured back again? What we need to impart is political prudence, not political belligerence.

Ideology is the disease, not the cure. All ideologies, including the ideology of *vox populi vox dei*, are hostile to enduring order and justice and freedom. The Constitution of the United States was not framed by ideologues, two centuries ago; and an intelligent repudiation of all ideology might well be woven into our bicentennial celebrations. cc

THE LURE OF YOUTH

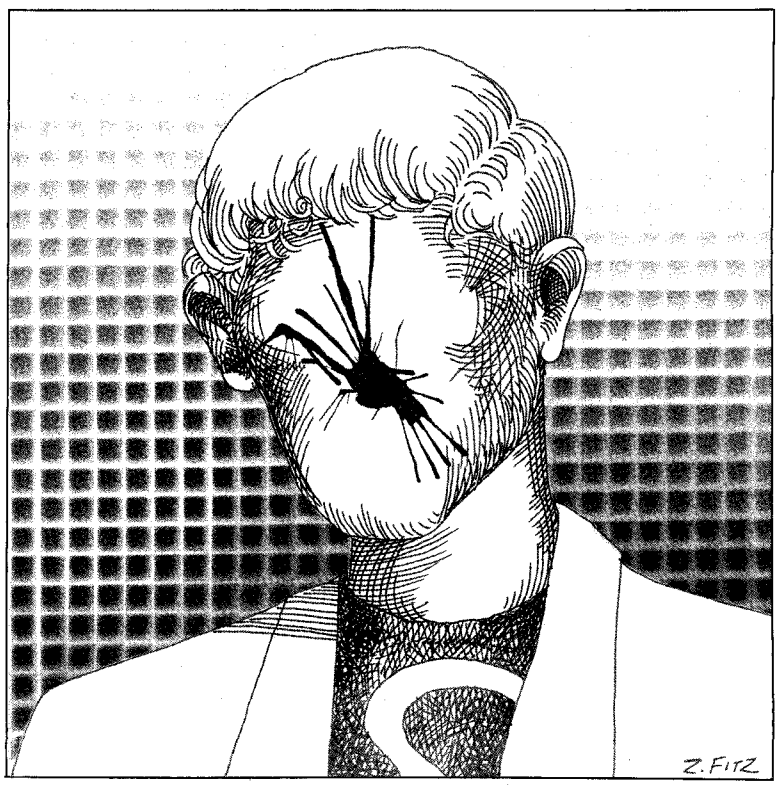
by Brian Murray

In the early 1920's, Wyndham Lewis began to discern the makings of a trend. Virtually everywhere he looked—and particularly in novels, newspapers, and magazines—Lewis found writing that retailed the wonders of childishness, precocity, and primitive energy; that implied, too, that life was quite finished at, say, 35.

Lewis devotes *The Doom of Youth* (1932) to exposing this "nursery-philosophy in operation." He discusses, among other things, the writing of one Godfrey Winn, a well-known Fleet Street columnist who regularly treated the public to gooey meditations on why, for example, he "should like just to stay nineteen." Lewis also devotes several sections of the book to gatherings of recent newspaper and magazine articles that deal largely with the assorted physical drawbacks of aging, and that he suggests speak "in loud tones, for themselves." One announces "THE WRINKLE MENACE"; another demands "DO YOU FEAR FORTY?" Others claim that "YOUTH IS AT THE WHEEL," that "YOUTH IS RESTLESS"—tired of "The Mess of the World For Which Generations of Elders Are Responsible." "The Boys and Girls," asserts another head, will "Put Things Right."

In *The Doom of Youth*, Lewis contends that this rampant "youngergenerationconsciousness" began because, in the wake of the First World War, "everyone wished" to "blot out the past" and "to be, as it were, new born." But he also insists more expansively—and perhaps less convincingly—that firmly behind the spread of "youth-propaganda" was a junto of monopolists and magnates who schemed to create a fad-obsessed consumer culture, and so shrewdly enlisted the popular press—"the propaganda department, as it were, of Big Business"—to trumpet repeatedly the *latest* theories, the *newest* products, the *hottest* cinema stars. As importantly, such stories helped "Big Business" remind its "herds in office, workshop, and factory" that, since their ultimate worth was wholly related to their nimble youthfulness, they ought to shut up and be happy with whatever work they could secure once they found themselves on the far side of 30. Lewis argued that these sinister business interests aimed ultimately to put the wages of all workers who hit 29 or so on a diminishing scale, and to recruit ever-increasing numbers of stupid and eager adolescents, who could be run cheaply and quietly, like machines. Thus "youth," though apotheosized, was in the long run "doomed."

Whatever its more immediate causes, the modern cult of youth that Lewis described grew even more pervasive as the nations of Europe and North America began to rebuild at the conclusion of the Second World War. By the mid-1950's, scores of novelists and script and jingle writers were advertising the message that no fate is worse than passing into adulthood; that only among the ranks of the young and the young-at-heart are found the wise and truly alive; that,



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in sum, younger is indisputably better.

Indeed, in a 1953 *Commentary* piece, the drama critic Henry Popkin pointed to several popular novels and plays—including Truman Capote's *The Glass Harp*—which centered on childlike men and women and which tended to urge "a wholesale flight from the reality of our lives"—a flight to "the solace of sentiment, childhood, and the world of dreams." Popkin suggested that this artistic "back to the cradle movement" was developing largely because for an increasing number of people, life in the postwar era was becoming increasingly complicated and tense. "I don't mean to say," wrote Popkin, "with Arthur Miller, that the trouble is the shadow of McCarthy over the land. No, the trouble is McCarthy and everything else. We live with the atomic bomb and under a permanent threat of war. Who wouldn't rather be eight years old?"

Of course, it was also in the 50's that manufacturers and advertisers in Europe and America began to more carefully analyze consumer markets, and to realize that the free world was quite full of impressionable teenagers with spare cash on their hands. Thus, the men in the music industry took to pressing and promoting rock records around the clock; moviemakers began cranking out low-budget sagas that featured flatteringly portrayed adolescents mixing it up with obtuse and frequently tyrannical adults. In fact, in many such films it is the young who must straighten out their elders. In *The Giant Gila Monster* (1959), for example, a misunderstood hot-rodder unsuccessfully tries to convince the adults in charge that there really is a large, shifty-looking reptile hanging around the outskirts of town. In *The Blob* (1958), a young Steve McQueen is shunned when he claims to have come across some fast-spreading, man-eating gelatin from Mars. In *Shake, Rattle, and Roll* (1956), a noisy disc jockey and his high school pals successfully persuade a group of square grown-ups, led by the redoubtable Margaret Dumont, that rock 'n' roll is safe, hygienic, and here to stay. They succeed, of course, and in the film's closing scene—a scene reprised with slight variation in dozens of later rock films—both teens and adults are shown at the big dance hopping about to the big beat of a driving band.

Nearly all of the adult authority figures in Nicholas Ray's more artful *Rebel Without A Cause* (1955) are similarly unpleasant and ineffective when contrasted with 17-year-old Jim Stark, the film's principal "rebel." Jim's father wears a frilly apron and scurries around the house in mortal fear of his wife, who does little but nag and whine and speculate aloud about what the neighbors are thinking. Jim—famously portrayed by James Dean—is frustrated, sullen, and prone to running around with guys who steal hubcaps and wear black leather jackets and rolled-up jeans. However, Jim does seek to maintain a healthy sense of self-esteem, unlike the wimpish Mr. Stark who scrupulously avoids making decisions and making waves. In fact, in *Rebel* it is the son who winds up instructing the father on the importance of "doing the right thing." In the film's dramatic concluding scenes, we watch a chastened Mr. Stark promising Jim that his days as a clown and a coward are over.

J.D. Salinger is a more talented writer than the poor hacks who tossed off scripts for Hollywood in the 1950's. His 1951 novel *The Catcher in the Rye* cannot be dismissed as nothing more than—to use Lewis' phrase—"youth-propaganda." But in the 50's—and certainly in the 60's—*The Catcher in the Rye* was widely perceived to be both an apology for prolonged childishness and a consummate attack on virtually all that the adult world represents. After all, the book's 17-year-old narrator, Holden Caufield, often alludes to the precocious wisdom of his 10-year-old sister Phoebe and freely admits that he "sometimes acts like I'm about thirteen" and "sometimes like I was only about twelve." And Holden—whose mannerisms and expressions were mimicked by literate and sensitive adolescents everywhere—repeatedly suggests that most adults are incorrigibly "phony." Certainly, after Holden Caufield, there begins in American fiction a long line of young, often similarly preppy antiheroes; and most—like Benjamin Braddock in Charles Webb's *The Graduate*—appear utterly unwilling to tolerate the suppositions and customs that are at the center of their parents' world.

During the late 60's and early 70's, books and plays and big-budget films that celebrated the wisdom of the young while exposing the follies of their elders were simply everywhere; what Lewis had labeled "youngergenerationconsciousness" was at an all-time high. This, remember, was the period of *The Graduate*, *Getting Straight*, *Hair*, *Easy Rider*, *Alice's Restaurant*, and *Zabriskie Point*. It was the era of the Students for a Democratic Society and the Youth International Party, whose well-publicized leaders did much to make popular the phrase "never trust anyone over 30." Yippie Jerry Rubin, for one, promised the *Yale Daily News* in 1970 that he and his followers were "never gonna grow up. We will always be adolescents; we ain't never gonna be rational."

The economic and political power of youth and the influence of youthful tastes was then everywhere in evidence during the 1960's. Clerks and salesmen in Dubuque and Kokomo started showing up at parties in Nehru jackets, "granny" glasses, and flared trousers. Academics everywhere switched from tweeds to, say, railroad jackets and bell-bottomed jeans. Goodyear used rock melodies and dancing girls in miniskirts and white boots to sell radial tires; General Motors sold Oldsmobiles as—yes, Youngmobiles. Even Richard Nixon sought a more youthful "image" as he set out to woo the young. He turned up on the aggressively hip *Laugh-In* and entreated: "Sock it to me." He told Republicans convening in Miami that he would always "tell it like it is."

In 1969, the perceptive literary critic John Aldridge attacked the American youth cult in a short but insightful book entitled *In the Country of the Young*. Aldridge asserted that the "current young" were not "the most generally magnificent generation ever to grace human history." He found too many of them ill-educated, self-righteous, and politically naive—and, as a result, much too fond of "authoritarian and bureaucratic plans for the renovation of the world." Aldridge resented the way in which the young and their publicists, in creating "the prevailing fashions in manners, morals, dress, and personal hygiene," had succeeded in "democratizing the human body and evolving a corporate type of norm of female beauty and male handsomeness." He was steamed because "those of us who are

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now in their forties have scarcely known a moment in our mature lives when we have not been obliged to seek and shape our identities in the face of enormous moral and emotional pressure from the adolescent or preadolescent young." Observed Aldridge: "By now the young have so intimidated us with the sheer weight of their physical and moral presence that some of us have almost been persuaded to believe that our primary obligation to society is to die as quickly as possible, so that they can inherit the earth without further delay."

Charles A. Reich didn't object in the least to the ever-increasing influence of youth in American culture. In *The Greening of America*—a huge best-seller in 1970 and 1971—Reich, then 42, made it perfectly clear that the people he listened to with the most respect were people much younger than himself. In the tradition of Rousseau and Oscar Wilde, Reich appeared to believe that age corrupts, and that middle-age corrupts absolutely; that frequently from the lips of the young come words of undiluted wisdom. He praised what he called "the new generation" for developing "a new consciousness" that emphasized "self," impulsiveness, and play; for attacking "authority and hierarchy"; for eschewing business suits for "hippie clothes"; even for sparking a renewed interest in "genuine, old-fashioned, unhomogenized peanut butter." "All people," Reich concluded, "must be helped to regain the condition of youth."

During the 1970's, the sort of cliché-ridden political activism that Aldridge scored declined markedly, perhaps because a large portion of the nation's political utopians were themselves caught up in the great diet and exercise craze. Indeed, during the 70's, it often seemed as if all Americans over the age of 25 were not only suddenly—and understandably—interested in maintaining good physical health, but were sweating hard to regain the very condition of youth. The 70's and the 80's will long be linked with Jimmy Carter in jogging shorts and Jane Fonda in leotards; with face-lifts, tanning parlors, and fruit juice bars; with an epidemic nostalgia for the 50's and early 60's, when the postwar Baby Boomers really were young and snug in a world of teddy bears, tail fins, dungarees, and pompadours.

As the English critic John Sutherland has pointed out, it was also during the 70's that "the American persuasion industry" became even more skilled at inducing in adults "the appetites, enthusiasms, and loyalties of their kids," and in pushing products with "all-generational appeal." Hence the high profits for the operators of "theme parks" and the manufacturers of candy bars, soda pop, and T-shirts bearing slogans; for the producers of rock records and videos. (MTV says it shoots for "the 13 to 34" market.) Hence, too, the enormous success of moviemakers like George Lucas and Steven Spielberg, who concentrate on turning out such widely hyped, cartoon-like vehicles as *Star Wars*, *E.T.*, and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. Indeed, Spielberg—a man in his mid-30's—stands as the perfect representative of these youth-conscious times. In 1982 he told *Time* magazine that "his mental development stopped at 19" and that he "seldom turns off the TV set in his Coldwater Canyon house." He also happily reported that he "owns twelve video games and plays with them for an hour a day."

Not surprisingly, children are consistently sentimentalized in the films that Spielberg directs or produces. These boys and girls are not only witty and cute, but are so astute that they simply don't require adults for even minimal guidance. In fact, in such Spielberg films as *E.T.* and *The Goonies*, we again see children taking it upon themselves to save the day. Nowhere in Spielberg's movies do we find an adult character remotely like Lewis Stone's white-haired Judge Hardy, who lost neither his patience nor his bearings as he helped Mickey Rooney keep his nose clean throughout the Andy Hardy series of the 30's and the early 40's. Nor do we see characters like Mary Poppins or Caractacus Potts—the wacky inventor in Ian Fleming's *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*—who manage to get along unusually well with children without losing their status as admirable, if eccentric, role models.

But then, since the early 70's, mass market movies with domestic settings or romantic themes have focused decreasingly on interesting characters who are 35 to 40 or more and who look, act, and talk like grown-up men and women. By and large, Hollywood simply no longer makes movies like—take your pick—*Adam's Rib*, *Gentleman's Agreement*, *Rear Window*, *Executive Suite*, *The African Queen*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, and *The World of Suzie Wong*. After the late 60's it could provide few good roles for talented performers like Gregory Peck, Jimmy Stewart, Kirk Douglas, and Audrey Hepburn.

Instead, in such films as *Porky's*, *Class*, *Footloose*, and *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, parents and teachers appear as lechers or hypocrites or tyrants; in *Secret Admirer* and the enormously successful *Back to the Future*, among others, they are clods and mumblers and suffer much when compared to their adolescent children, who know how to be cool-headed and socially deft in critical situations. In dozens of other popular films that focus primarily on the infatuations and sexual escapades of teenagers, adults play virtually no part at all. In *Risky Business*, for example, a high school senior converts the family Cape Cod into a profitable suburban cathouse while his parents are conveniently gone on a lengthy summer vacation.

Admittedly, a strong case could be made that such films as *Risky Business* and *Secret Admirer* are essentially accurate in their depiction of the ways in which perhaps a majority of adults and their adolescent children interact—or fail to interact—in the America of the 1980's. For as Paul Goodman complained 25 years ago in *Growing Up Absurd*, "our abundant society" does not abundantly provide adolescents and young adults with "real opportunities for worthwhile experience"—with civilian roles that are responsible, respected, and conducive to "growing up." Instead we herd even the most restless and the least clever of them through a largely inefficient elementary and secondary school system that in most places probably stupefies far more than it stimulates. Too, we are a nation in which the typical citizen now spends around six hours a day staring at his television set. In such an environment, communication between the generations is not likely to thrive.

Certainly television—with its constant barrage of tips, tales, and bits of gossip—has been a key factor in diminishing the social role of the elderly. In primitive societies—and in small-town America, once upon a time—the alert old assumed the valued task of passing on their knowledge

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of ritual and lore to their community's younger members. Now television imparts general values and—through its comedies, dramas, and advertisements—reveals which patterns of behavior are socially acceptable, and which will lead to failure or success. In the television age, the old function as just one more demographic block to be lured into collecting an endless stream of "new" products that promise slimness, energy, regularity—in a word, youth.

There is, in fact, a tendency in recent American movies to depict most favorably those grown-up characters who either act like youths or who aggressively seek rejuvenation. Consider *Cocoon*. Don Ameche and the other retirees who are at the center of this film's action are in relatively good mental and physical health, but they are shown to be quite useless until they begin taking laps in a swimming pool that contains water that has been rendered powerfully rejuvenescent by a secretive but cordial group of spacemen. (Plausibility is now even less in fashion than old age.) Newly frisky, Ameche & Co. are shown at the end of the film abandoning earth—and with it their children and grandchildren—in order to fly with the friendly aliens to Antares, a planet where youthful vitality supposedly lasts for hundreds of years.

Consider, too, *Blame It on Rio*, the slick Stanley Donen production that remains popular with renters and purchasers of video cassettes. Here Michael Caine appears as a 43-year-old businessman who—while on vacation in Rio de Janeiro—enters into a partly romantic, largely sexual relationship with his best friend's 15-year-old daughter Jennifer. Initially Caine is reluctant to begin the affair, for Jennifer still calls him "Uncle Matthew"; she wears an orthodontic retainer and sleeps with a teddy bear. And like most 15-year-olds, she's as hollow as a jug. But she is also curvy and pretty and persistent in her belief that a man heading for 50 is not too old to "get crazy" with a girl too young to drive. Indeed, Uncle Matthew—after going crazy—concedes to Jennifer: "I hope I'm as smart as you when I get to be your age."

As Neil Postman points out in *The Disappearance of Childhood* (1982), commercial television has been no better at featuring adults who are both mature and comfortable with their maturity. Most game shows, for example, include contestants who "are selected with great care to ensure that their tolerance for humiliation (by a simulated adult, the 'emcee') is inexhaustible, their emotions instantly arousable, their interest in things a consuming passion. Indeed, a game show is a parody of sorts of a classroom in which childlike contestants are duly rewarded for obedience and precociousness but are otherwise subjected to all the indignities that are traditionally the schoolchild's burden."

Network TV's comedies and melodramas, notes Postman, are also full of characters like Archie Bunker, Laverne and Shirley, the gang from *The Love Boat*, and the 30-year-old "Fonz": characters who, as Postman puts it, "can hardly be said to be adult characters, even after one has made allowances for the traditions of the formats in which they appear." "With few exceptions," observes Postman, adults in television "have no politics, practice no religion, represent no tradition, have no foresight in serious plans, have no extended conversations, and in no circumstances allude to anything that is not familiar to an eight-year-old person." In the early 80's, Postman could point only to the prissy Felix Unger in reruns of *The Odd Couple* as a TV character "who is depicted as having an adult's appetite for serious music and whose language suggests that he has, at one time in his life, actually read a book." As Postman accurately puts it, "the majority of adults on TV shows are depicted as functionally illiterate, not only in the sense that the content of book learning is absent from what they appear to know but also because of the absence of even the faintest signs of contemplative habit of mind."

This widespread extolment of juvenility and juvenescence has surely contributed to all sorts of anxieties and neuroses. After all, in its crudest form, "youth-propaganda" says to the old: you are superfluous—dross. And it confuses and deludes the young by telling them: you are for but a brief time blessed. Pimply and clumsy adolescence is—believe it or not—the high point of human existence. Indulge, therefore: "party." You will never know such pleasure; you will never be as wise. Or as John Cougar Mellencamp succinctly put it in his hit single "Jack and Diane": "Hold on to 16 for as long as you can." (An older and wiser Mellencamp now apologizes for the implications.)

It would seem safe to contend that this continuing preoccupation with what Lewis called "Peter Panism" has contributed much to the further vulgarization of American culture. For culture—at least as Matthew Arnold understood it—requires a knowledge of the past and a respect for tradition. To thrive, it needs large numbers of citizens who are not only literate, but also passionate about preserving—and making widely available—the best that has been thought and known in the world. In contrast, the American youth cult generally celebrates schmaltz and schlock. Largely because of it we have become what the biographer and music critic Albert Goldman has not inaccurately described as a "civilization that survives through the incessant recycling of cultural waste products: cast-off clothes, old comic strips, rerun (or remade) movies."

Until his death in 1957, Wyndham Lewis worried about the disastrous political consequences of rampant "younger-generationism" in the political democracies of the Western world. In the 30's—as order in Europe gradually disintegrated—Lewis observed that what demogogues and would-be tyrants most craved in a population was precisely what "youth-propaganda" in the long run promotes. Demogogues and autocrats, observed Lewis, craved the "mechanical Infant-Robot," the "standardized Peter Pan" who "learns nothing and forgets everything." Autocrats can do much with "a mind *without backgrounds*, without any spiritual depth, a flat mirror for propaganda, a parrot-soul to give back the catchwords, an ego *without reflection*."

Of course, Lewis was phlegmatic by nature; in his own young adulthood he spent a lot of time—perhaps too much time—brooding over Friedrich Nietzsche. Against him we can place Professor Reich, who argued in *The Greening of America* that a nation preoccupied with youth was a nation that was destined to remain vigorous, colorful, and constructively innovative. Let's hope old Charlie was right. cc

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Conspiracies Against the Nation

(continued from page 11)

and call for the dismantlement of entitlement programs, some of them seem perfectly willing to push their own agenda at the Federal level. Some think the government should provide a nondenominational school prayer. Others want an anti-gun-control amendment. Still others want to use the NEH or Department of Education to support conservative ideology. Writing recently in the *Wall Street Journal*, Martin Morse Wooster quite rightly ridicules NEH grants to promote conservative ideology. Many of the programs receiving support are estimable in themselves, but humanities money which could be supporting scholarship is now being diverted to 900-word editorials.

Part of this new-found enthusiasm for benevolent despotism is understandable as the predictable response of an outsider who finds himself a member of the club. Washington is swarming with conservative groupies on the make, all eager to prove Stanton Evans' law of politics: whenever one of our people gets in power, he becomes one of their people. But there is a nastier side to this: self-serving greed is one of those human weaknesses conservatives are supposed to understand and take precautions against, but a passion for ideology is more dangerous.

In what sense are conservatives becoming ideological? The moral absolutism of some right-to-life extremists is only one example. Another more pervasive ideological stand can be traced to fusionism itself: the idealization of big business. Once again, the defense of free market capitalism was forced upon us by Marxists and social democrats, but while most Americans endorse the common sense of Calvin Coolidge ("the business of America is business"), the fanaticism of libertarians is another. It has had disastrous consequences for environmental politics. In the past 10 years, the stock response to air and water pollution from the right has been: (1) there is no problem; and (2) government caused it; but (3) it is the necessary price we pay for economic growth; besides (4) in a democratic society, there are trade-offs—more jobs/more smog—and we are free to choose the ratios.

These arguments are essentially correct. Pollution levels are hysterically overestimated by the left; government was the villain at Love Canal; free market solutions do work better than government regulations. But toxic wastes —chemical or nuclear—are not a laughing matter for the victims whose freedom to choose is more than a little impaired by leukemia and stomach cancer. There is a strange reluctance to admit that any businessman can ever do wrong or that the hazards of environmental pollution are more serious than the stink of SO_2 from a paper mill.

On some issues, the blanket support for business interests puts conservatives against the conservative instincts of most Americans. Many people are concerned about the rate of illegal immigration from Latin America—what it will do to our sense of unity, our culture, and our language. It is easy to understand why the left opposes stricter controls—anything to destroy the common enemy of mankind, the U.S. But not a few conservatives are discovering how our culture is being enriched by the newcomers. "Enriched" is the operative word, since the principal concern is for the steady supply of illegals willing to work for less than minimum wage. Such cynicism is too much for the businessmen, even in the Southwest, who have mounted a principled opposition to the sanctuary movement and are in favor of regaining control of our southern border. The problem is, therefore, not so much pursuit of self-interest as a blind commitment to the bottom line as something good in itself.

The sad truth is that some conservatives are only antileftists, their agenda nothing more than a contrarian strategy. Whatever the left has done, conservatives want to undo and are willing to use any means at their disposal. They have stared too long at the face on the other side of the glass and have come to see themselves as a reverse reflection. In *The Lord of the Rings*, the High Steward Denethor possesses a crystal that allows him to observe the plans of the enemy. But the enemy has a stronger mind and will and allows him to see so much of his strength that it unhinges Denethor's mind. It is possible for conservatives to make the same mistake. By seizing power and using the vast bureaucracy for "good," they will be—to use another illustration from Tolkien—using the great ring of power to defeat its master, but in the end becoming the servants, not the lord, of the ring.

When Satan tempted Christ, his best offer was power:

> The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the Kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou will fall down and worship me.

We cannot understand from the gospels that Christ was tempted by power itself, but by the opportunity to do good—as Milton depicted the scene in *Paradise Regained*. The only drawback was the price we have to pay for pursuing power. It is possibly too much to ask of a politician to answer, "Get thee hence, Satan."

The most courageous act conservatives can perform will be to begin dismantling the power of government, depoliticize America, cast away the "ring" into the cracks of doom. Since the days of Hoover, we have suffered at the hands of boy wonders, whiz kids, and brain trusts—all of them with bright ideas of how to reconstruct a new America. Some of their ideas, we are probably stuck with for a while: attempts to obliterate Social Security entirely or dismantle all of the welfare state will probably serve only to polarize the nation.

The great success of American politics has been the refusal to take most questions to the extreme. We have never had a successful conservative party or a major radical party, either. Instinctively, our politicians seem to realize that the game they are playing is a little like checkers or chess: Control the center of the board and you win everything; run to the edge or the corners, and you may survive for a while, but eventually even a weaker opponent will trap and destroy you. The conservative role must be to unite us—not around a rightist ideology, but around the common principles on which we can agree.

One such principle is our historic commitment to "the government that governs least." Most Americans still seem to feel the government spends too much and interferes too much with private life. If conservatives are going to provide

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the leadership for our escape from the wilderness, they will have to recognize that people don't want *them* sticking their noses into decisions which only families and communities can make. They didn't like Lyndon Johnson interfering in their business, and they don't want Ronald Reagan looking under their beds. If we start legislating for other people's own good and impose our views on abortion, pornography, and free enterprise by executive fiat working in tandem with a packed Supreme Court, then the dime's worth of difference between Democrats and Republicans will have been devalued to one red cent.

—*Thomas Fleming*

REVISIONS

Scripture for Skeptics

The historian of religion who boasts of objectivity deserves to be trusted almost as far as a used-car salesman calling himself Honest John. Hugh Schonfield is a case in point. A Jewish scholar born in London and educated in Scotland, Schonfield established himself as an iconoclastic celebrity in 1965 with his controversial book *The Passover Plot*. Recently reissued by Element Books of London, *The Passover Plot* argues that Jesus tried to fake death on the cross through the clever use of drugs. Applauded by atheists and liberal clergymen, the book helped inspire the countercultural religiosity of *Jesus Christ, Superstar*. But most Christians rejected Schonfield's theory as just one more effort to explain away the Resurrection, more imaginative perhaps than ancient Jewish calumnies against Mary and the Resurrection, but not surpassing the inventiveness of Oscar Wilde's fantasy (recorded by Yeats) about Jesus' secret life as a brooding carpenter who always kept his hands covered after surviving the cross. Few Christians have been much more receptive to Schonfield's subsequent works—including *After the Cross, Those Incredible Christians, The Pentecost Revolution*, and *The Essene Odyssey*—in which he continues his assault upon Christian doctrine and belief by popularizing the notion that the Christian evangelists misappropriated and distorted the essentially Jewish message of an entirely human Jesus. To understand Jesus' *real* significance, we must lay aside the epistles of Paul and study the Dead Sea Scrolls instead.

Schonfield has now continued his private crusade for truth with a new one-man translation of the New Testament, *The Original New Testament* (Harper & Row; San Francisco; $19.95). In the preface to this new translation, Schonfield writes: "I have sought to approach these records objectively, as if they had recently been recovered from a cave in the Holy Land or from beneath the sands in Egypt, and had never previously been given to the public." Such an approach is either absurdly naive, arrogantly presumptuous, or deceptively disingenuous. Why would any honest translator ignore the centuries of efforts by the best Greek scholars and the most accomplished text critics in collating and interpreting the numerous manuscripts of the New Testament—why, unless a private agenda is being imposed on the text? Never mind that leading text critics are still quarreling over the merits of different manuscripts, now that Schonfield has miraculously discovered the *original* New Testament: he can't even be bothered with providing a critical apparatus or a serious bibliography.

In a recent interview with *Chronicles*, Schonfield insisted upon his perfect objectivity and his freedom from bias or preconception in his approach to Christianity and Christian documents. Serious students of the Greek New Testament will marvel at Schonfield's objectivity in action, especially when it permits his own conjectures to override every existing manuscript (as, for instance, in the "correction" of Paul's declaration in Philippians that for him "to live is Christ," emended to read "it is useful for me to live"). The deliberate avoidance of all distinctively Christian vocabulary (*immersion* for *baptism*, *envoy* for *apostle*, *community* for *church*), as though the Christian use of these terms had somehow contaminated them, will annoy at least a few readers. But it is the tendentiously skeptical introduction and footnotes that will offend most. It is hardly the decision of a scrupulously neutral historian to attribute the Christian belief in Jesus as the Son of God to the inability of non-Jewish converts to understand properly the Messianic concept. Nor is it simply an act of scholarship to add a footnote telling the reader that the angels at Jesus' empty tomb are dressed remarkably like Essene hermits or to add another note discrediting the account in John of Jesus' trial as a later accretion that assigns too much blame to the Sanhedrin and too little to the Romans.

Schonfield claims that he wishes to create "understanding between Christians and Jews." It is hard to imagine, however, a strategy more likely to create ill feelings between Christians and Jews than that of attacking Christian faith while assuming the posture of objective scholarship. Imagine the response of the Jewish Community, if a Christian scholar were to pass off *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as an authentic document. But as the former president of the Commonwealth of World Citizens and of the International Arbitration League, Schonfield no doubt resents the treatment he has himself received from the millions of Christians in Great Britain and the United States. After all, these people have ignored *his* splendid plans for creating world harmony while continuing to regard someone *else* as Prince of Peace. cc

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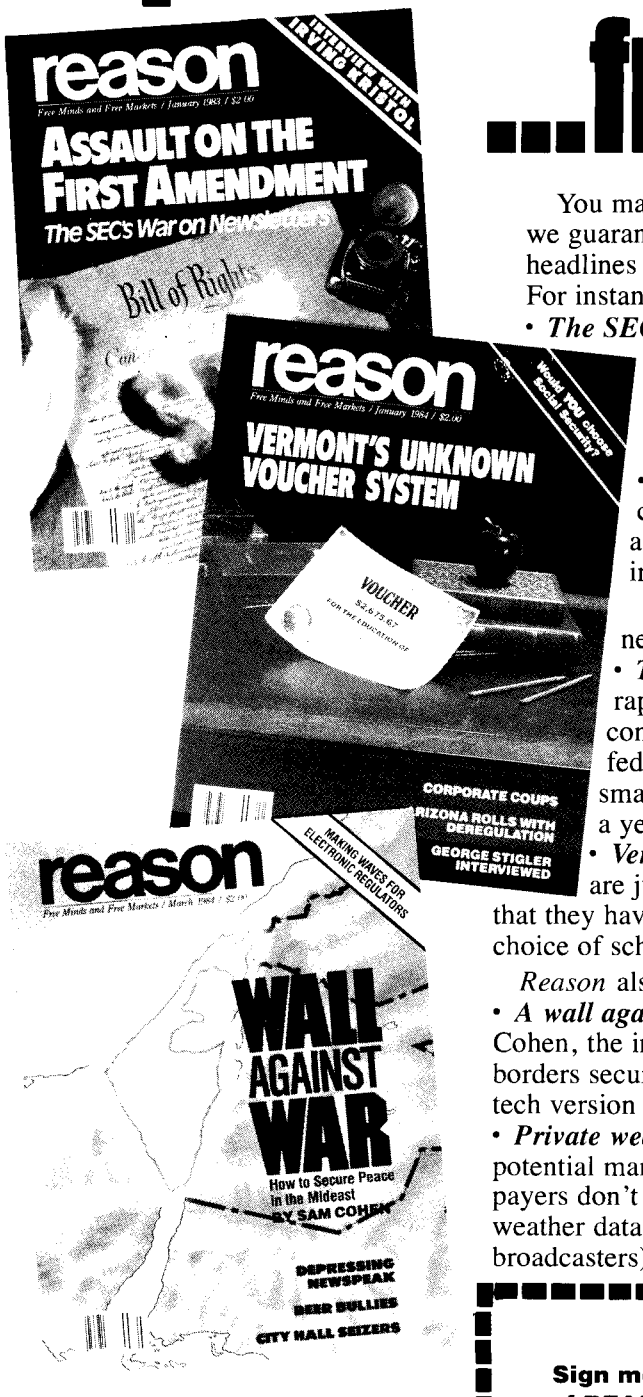
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Uncivil Rights *by William A. Donohue*

"It is better that some should be unhappy, than that none should be happy, which would be the case in a general state of equality."

—Samuel Johnson

Alan R. White: *Rights*; Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press; New York; $19.95.

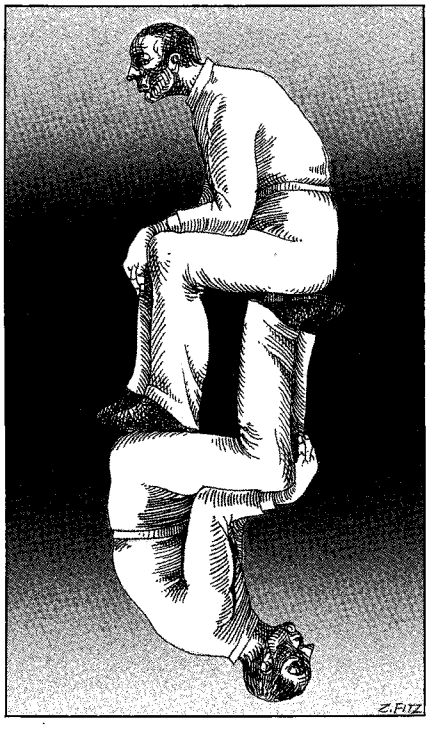
Nicholas Capaldi: *Out of Order*; Prometheus Books; Buffalo, NY; $17.95.

Michael Novak: *Freedom Without Justice*; Harper & Row; San Francisco.

Richard A. Posner: *The Federal Courts*; Harvard University Press; Cambridge, MA.

The best way to corrupt a value is to maximize it. That is one of the fundamental lessons of liberalism in the postwar period. Take rights. Push one person's rights too far and the result is the emasculation of someone else's rights. Elevate rights to the status of an absolute and the result is the destruction of other values. Expand the definition of rights to include all desirable ends and the result is a diminution of interest in those rights that really matter. Extend the idea of rights to every conceivable animate and inanimate subject and the result is a depreciation of human rights. In short, attempts to maximize rights insure their minimization.

In the midst of the contemporary confusion over the meaning of rights comes the volume entitled *Rights* by philosopher Alan R. White. He lays bare the similarities and dissimilarities between rights and such notions as duty, obligation, ought, liberty, power, privilege, and claim. By doing so, he provides a welcome antidote to the muddled thinking on this subject that has prevailed on both sides of the Atlantic for the past 20 years. We have become so accustomed to thinking about rights as if they were a game,



one in which the rules and participants are exchanged in tag-team fashion, that any disciplined approach seems antiquated. White succeeds because he imposes order on an area where there is little and clarity of vision where there is less still.

A favorite stratagem of new rights crusaders has been to declare something a good (money, equality of status, etc.) and then deduce a right to it. It is as though a desire for something by itself confers a right to it. But "in no sense," White argues, "does the fact that something is good for someone provide a ground which is logically either necessary or sufficient for his possession of a right to it." In fact, "there is nothing whose very nature conceptually gives rise to a right." What one has a right to can be no more, or less, than what one is entitled to.

It is the left that has played fast and loose with the idea of rights and has given the discussion its present elasticity. Nowhere is this more evident than in the debate over equality. By forever trying to maximize equality, the left has twisted and trivialized the idea of rights, without seriously affecting the level of inequality. In the vocabulary of the left, equal protection before the laws has come to mean social and economic equality. Mention the term equal opportunity to a leftist, and all he hears is equality. On the other hand, mention equal opportunity to a conservative, and all he can hear is opportunity.

Consider the last example. The idea of equality favored by the left—equal outcomes—requires a policy which restricts the rights of others. They seek to help the dispossessed by dispossessing others. Helping the poor means hurting the nonpoor, either through taxation or quotas. On the other hand, conservatives seek to help the dispossessed by empowering them to possess what they are capable of possessing. Helping the poor means the creation of new wealth, new markets, and new opportunities. It is a forward-looking vision, one that contrasts sharply with the zero-sum mentality of their opponents. In a real sense, conservatives are right to describe themselves as the true progressives.

"Doctrinaire liberalism," writes Nicholas Capaldi, "is the most perva-

William A. Donohue is author of The Politics of the American Civil Liberties Union *(Transaction Books).*

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sive social ideology in our society." Indeed it is, as anyone who has ever spent time in the academy quickly learns. Capaldi sees in contemporary liberalism a psychologistic view of man and society, one that presupposes an individual motive behind all that exists. If there is injustice or inequality (regarded as synonymous), someone must be to blame. This is the mentality that sees discrimination wherever there is group inequality. If Jewish schoolteachers earn more than Irish schoolteachers, it must be due to discrimination. It is rarely considered that Jewish teachers typically work in well-paid public schools, whereas many Irish teachers *choose* to work in poorly paid Catholic schools. All ideologues understand is the equation of inequality with injustice.

Having jettisoned an interest in equal opportunity, today's liberals have embraced a right to equality. Capaldi is at his best in describing the way in which affirmative action has been manufactured in this country. Unelected bureaucrats, in a variety of administrative agencies of the Federal government, have discovered rights in areas of the law where none previously existed. More than that, they have succeeded, with the help of the courts, in enforcing these rights.

It is the university that has been hardest hit by affirmative action. Ostensibly committed to excellence, the quota-run institutions of higher education have substituted equality for quality. It is a situation which, as Capaldi notes, "was not imposed from without by politicians but positively engineered from within the university community." Those who have served on faculty search committees can testify to the extent that race and sex have become primary determinants in the evaluation process. Let me correct myself. I should have said that race and sex count only when there is a true position available. I have never met one person in academia who expressed a belief in affirmative action and who didn't also try to pull strings (politely called "networking") for a friend or lover interested in an opening. The unstated rule is "Affirmative action is fine just so long as no one has any personal interest in which gentleperson gets the job."

Prominent among the new rights crusaders have been the U.S. Catholic bishops. The first draft of their 1984 pastoral letter on the economy asserted that having a job was a basic human right. While the second draft was somewhat more moderate in tone, provoking Michael Novak to praise the bishops for making "scores of changes," the injunction that a job is a right remained unchanged. The logic that what is good to have entails a right to have remained as popular as ever. It is the utopian cast to Catholic social thought that explains such logic. The communitarian spirit that is the font of Catholic teaching inclines toward collectivist responses to economic need. This ethos, which may be good in itself, prevents them from realizing that the public good may often be best served by allowing people to pursue their own interests.

Michael Novak is actively engaged in trying to change the way we have come to think about the relationship between Catholic social thought and bourgeois democracy. He is determined to show that: (a) there is more fecundity in Catholic social thought than we've been led to believe; and (b) there is a goodness of fit between the central teachings of Catholicism and the institutions of democratic capitalism. As any conservative Catholic will admit, this is a tall order. There can be no denying the influence of the Catholic left, which has, since Vatican II, set the agenda.

Catholics of every ideological bent agree that the heart and soul of Catholic social thought is the principle of individual human dignity. When juxtaposed with the duty to love thy neighbor, we have a catechism that makes human rights and social obligations a religious imperative. The problem is how to achieve these noble ends. Following Jacques Maritain, Novak implores us to consider alternatives to statist prescriptions.

State and society, as both Marx and Maritain observed, are analytically distinct entities. When the state seeks to do for others what they can do for themselves, or what others can do for their neighbors, it nullifies social obligations by usurping the role of voluntary associations. More important, it deadens civic spirit. A plural social order is absolutely indispensable if social obligations are to be realized. That the state has failed to provide for the people what they could have provided for themselves—if only left alone—is the legacy of Ethiopia's Leviathan and other progeny of Marxist philosophy.

If democratic capitalism is the way, why the resistance? The hard evidence that capitalism works and socialism doesn't is not good enough. As long as socialism continues to be seductive through its humanitarian appeals on behalf of the poor, the relative affluence that is Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea and the poverty that is Africa will not be understood as the triumph of capitalism and the failure of socialism. It is the rhetoric of the liberation theologians that exercises such a visceral appeal to Catholic bishops. The case for democratic capitalism must go beyond statistical data to reach those who don't understand how communitarian values can exist in a market economy. Novak, fortunately, is doing just that.

The political institutions of democracy can serve human rights only if we don't expect more from them than they can deliver. Once we place demands on them to settle every conceivable dispute and provide resolution of all human conflict, we are begging the impossible and insuring dismay. Richard Posner is rightly alarmed about the toll which an overtaxed Federal court system has been asked to bear in recent years. Posner offers both diagnosis and prescription: he is insightful, creative, and practical.

The case-load explosion in the Federal courts can be traced (as almost every other problem of the 80's can be) to the events of the 1960's. The 1960's was the era of rights, ushered in most visibly by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. "The last quarter-century," writes Posner, "has seen much legislative and particularly judicial creation of federal rights." There can be no doubting the effect which the Great Society has had on increasing the load of the Federal courts. From the rights of prisoners to the rights of welfare recipients, the number of proceedings has skyrocketed, especially at the appeal level (almost all Federal criminal defendants appeal). Equality before the laws was given new meaning as public interest lawyers and activist judges interpreted it as meaning McGovernism.

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Posner challenges the conventional incorporation theory of the Fourteenth Amendment which holds that the Amendment makes the Bill of Rights applicable to the states. The Bill of Rights, he instructs, was designed to weaken the Federal government: "Apply the Bill of Rights to the states through the due process clause and you weaken the states tremendously by handing over control of large areas of public policy to the federal judges." He suggests that, as an alternative, we limit the application of our process to laws that deprive persons of life, liberty, or property in violation of a fundamental social norm held by most of the nation. This would breathe new life into states rights without abandoning an interest in protecting agreed-upon civil liberties.

The biggest problem facing the Federal courts is not the case-load crisis, it is the perennial difficulty in deciding how best to interpret statutes and the Constitution. Posner departs from the traditional canons-of-construction approach. He would urge judges to assume the role of the other, i.e., place themselves in the shoes of the legislators and then decide the case according to how they would have wanted the statute applied. Perhaps this would save us from the practice of ingenuously finding "penumbras" in the law, but it is not certain how it would deter an activist judge from reading equal opportunity as equal results. Then again, Posner readily admits that "no one has discovered how to keep the judges within proper bounds." Nor has anyone found a way to stop gluttons from reaching for more.

Judge Posner, as much as Novak, White, and Capaldi, is opposed to a promiscuous reading of human rights. What Richard Morgan calls the "rights industry" has been leading the way, offering an expansive exegesis of individual liberty without a murmur of concern for any attendant responsibilities. Their credo reads "When in doubt, call it a right." By attempting to maximize freedom, they have corrupted both its meaning and usage. White, Capaldi, Novak, and Posner have provided the guns we need to do battle with this industry. It is time to use them. cc

Saints or Stockbrokers? *by Paul Gottfried*

"As long as virtue was dominant in the republic so long was the happiness of the people secure."
—Robert E. Lee

John Patrick Diggins: *The Lost Soul of American Politics*; Basic Books; New York.

John P. Diggins raises various, often profound, questions about the moral foundations of America as a political society. Diggins is fond of calling attention to what he considers the underlying cultural tensions in American history. He discusses, for example, the contradiction between the 18th-century American stress on community (which he regards as part of the Puritan legacy) and the Lockean individualism evident in the Declaration of Independence. He states emphatically that the "rights" celebrated in the Declaration are Lockean natural rights. Moreover, the "life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness" to which the American revolutionaries committed themselves were seen as vested in the individual, not in any historic community. He insists that neither *The Federalist* nor the Constitution it was written to defend would indicate that Americans were predominantly devout Protestant Christians. Although Joseph Story, Tocqueville, and other observers of early American life were struck by the pervasive piety of the American people, it is hard to infer the presence of popular piety from reading either the Constitution or Madison's remarks on religious factions in *The Federalist* papers.

Paul Gottfried is author of The Search for Historical Meaning: Hegel and the American Right *(Northern Illinois University Press).*

Diggins, who recognizes the gravity of these questions, does not try to discuss them with jerry-built historical explanations. While there may be truth, for example, in the view of, among others, Gordon Wood, that the constitutional convention occurred during a period of religious disenchantment between two great rivals, Diggins recognizes that that cannot be the entire explanation. The most important advocates of the Constitution expounded in their pamphlets a mechanistic view of government. They defended the new Federal structure, by showing in what way it would keep religious and other interests balanced while allowing citizens to pursue their acquisitive impulse. Such arguments are neither classical-pagan nor Judeo-Christian. They arose in the secular, materialistic environment of the 18th-century Enlightenment. It is worth noting that the Constitution's defenders tried to appeal to a religious people through a politics of interest rather than morality. From the results, the Constitution's adoption, we may conclude that the appeal of *The Federalist's* authors proved effective.

Diggins provides two general answers to the questions about American character that he raises. First, he recognizes that the contradictions at issue have been endemic to American life for at least two centuries. Americans have tried to overcome them by staking out, in political discourse and in

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their lives, a middle ground between individual rights and material interest on the one side, and religious and social obligations on the other. Americans have chosen heroes who seem, in some way, to have risen above the contradiction between material right and moral duty.

Significantly, Diggins' saintly Lincoln illustrates his view of American heroes as bridges between self-interest and duty. His Lincoln has nothing in common with the political realists who placed American Union above the emancipation of Negro slaves, who in 1863 backed Tsarist Russia in crushing an uprising of its Polish subjects, who suspended the right of due process in jailing opponents of the war, and who authorized the devastation of the insurgent South. Although Lincoln's single-minded, relentless pursuit of wartime objectives may have been necessary to preserve the Union at any price, I for one am tired of attempts to turn America's Bismarck into a Victorian Christ. Lincoln's religious rhetoric may help to explain the image of him left to posterity. Calvinist ideas of guilt and redemption were present in Lincoln's political statements, even when he spoke of the secular, individual rights which the Declaration supposedly guaranteed to whites and Blacks alike. Diggins correctly notes that Lincoln's appeal to biblical themes allowed him to give the Declaration a broadness of meaning that would have shocked its author, Thomas Jefferson.

Diggins looks for points of intersection between Calvinist religious values and the pursuit of wealth in American culture. He insists (at least in some places) that the recourse to moral arguments on the part of practitioners of the work ethic has not been a mere rationalization for the pursuit of wealth. Americans have felt a genuine, persistent need to harmonize the Protestant biblical heritage with their belief in material things. Diggins does not claim that the American preoccupation with accumulating wealth resulted from Protestant moral concepts. Rather, he stresses the American people's attempt to justify living in two cultures: one teaching original sin and the need for redemption; and the other glorifying material advancement in a land of opportunity.

Diggins sees "the dignity of work" as a concept by which Americans have tried to harmonize the two cultures. Nineteenth-century Americans could only justify the accumulation of wealth as the fruit of diligent toil freely given. The redemptive value of free labor is a theme sympathetically treated in 19th-century American letters and religious homilies. Those who expounded and absorbed this belief were usually critical of two other social ideals: a plantation system built on servile labor; and the collectivized economy that the socialists preached.

Diggins is most informative in tracing the emergence of an American civil religion, based on the work ethic and wedding Calvinism to a culture of affluence. Unfortunately, he is not consistent. His own anticapitalist bias prevents him from believing that the American middle class took its work ethic seriously. Although Diggins is willing to ascribe sincerity to political and artistic exponents of the dignity of free labor, he resorts to Marxist methods in explaining why nonintellectuals expressed the same idea. Outside of

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what he imagines to be a circle of kindred souls anticipating his own mind-set, he assigns no real significance to ideas not dependent on material interests.

He treats Protestant traditionalists as selectively as he does the exponents of the work ethic. Diggins claims to admire the Evangelical Christians of the 1850's for mobilizing Americans against slavery. He also praises the Puritan component in American culture for raising the sights of a nation of shopkeepers. Yet, Diggins rages against modern Evangelicals, calling them bigots and racists for opposing abortion and gay liberation. Such tirades are unworthy of a serious historian. Does he really believe that Cotton Mather or Jonathan Edwards would have been less critical of the counterculture than Jerry Falwell? Does he think that Calvinist Abolitionists such as Lewis Tappan or Black Southern Baptists of 40 years ago would have been less "bigoted" about radical life-styles than the Southern Baptist Convention?

Diggins should and does know better. At his best he is a perceptive intellectual historian, at home in the world of ideas. I myself am indebted to his critical understanding of the American conservatism of the 1950's. Unlike James Henretta, Gerda Lerner, and other protesting historians, Diggins has not achieved recognition by sneering at established social morality —or by blasting the capitalist system that pampers its despisers. Despite his toeing of the party line, he has not progressed professionally as far as he could have, had he been a more strident radical and a less scrupulous scholar. Perhaps a bit of friendly criticism may encourage him to abandon the 60's entirely. As one graying historian to another, I urge him to find new sources of inspiration and to stop searching for the living among the mentally dead. cc

Straw Men and Ideologues *by Aileen S. Kraditor*

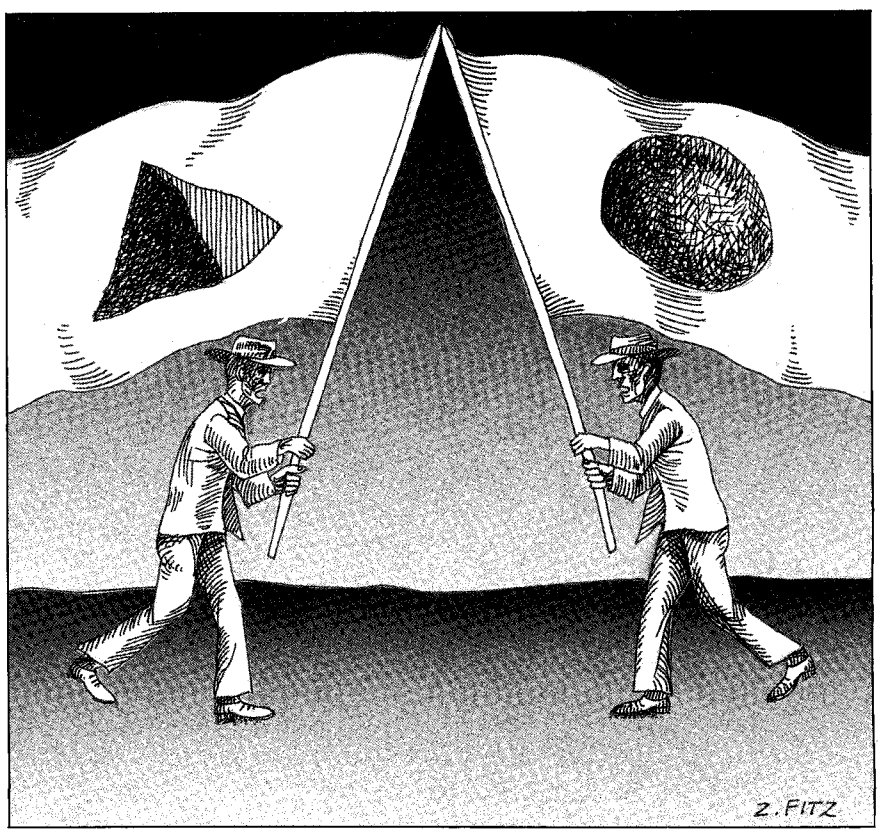
"It came burning hot into my mind, whatever he said and however he flattered, when he got me to his house, he would sell me for a slave."

—John Bunyan

Kenneth Minogue: *Alien Powers: The Pure Theory of Ideology*; St. Martin's Press; New York; $27.50.

Kenneth Minogue explains at the outset that he prefers a narrow definition of "ideology": the word refers not to all action-oriented systems of belief but only to certain types of false ones. The "central idea" discernible in the lives and thoughts of "ideologists," he says, "is so abstract that it is less a doctrine than a machine for generating doctrines, and its simplest formulation is that all evils are caused by an oppressive system. One of its more important corollaries is that truth is a weapon. This is the pure theory of ideology, and my aim is to explore its logical and rhetorical character." Minogue does not provide one comprehensive definition of ideology, but scattered throughout the book are statements that may be combined to suggest a definition: "any doctrine which presents one hidden and saving truth about the evils of the world in the form of social analysis" is an ideology, as is any "philosophical type of allegiance purporting to transcend the mere particularities of family, religion or native hearth, [whose] essence lies in struggle" between just two enemies, on the battlefield that is the world.

Because "ideology is the belief that *everything* that happens is explicable in terms of the relevant structure" of society, all ideologists share a "hostility to modernity: to liberalism in politics, individualism in moral practice, and the market in economics." Mino-



Aileen S. Kraditor is Professor Emerita of Boston University and author of The Radical Persuasion, 1890-1917.

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gue views ideology as "a purportedly scientific doctrine which reveals the secret of the human condition" and is "associated with a specific class of person nominated as the bearers of the motor of history." "Ideology explains evil and facilitates change" and announces that "the business of life is liberation," even if most people live under the illusion that they are free and do not realize that "what we do and what we think are actually determined by the structure" of society. "Ideology's core," Minogue finds, "is reason's protest against an irrational world."

Modern ideology, says Minogue, was born in the 1840's when Marx transformed the Christian doctrine of alienation of man from God into a materialist doctrine of alienation of man from man and from himself. Ideologists rejected free will and blamed alienation on men's living within a "system" that determines all thoughts and actions. Marx claimed scientific status for his theory but could not keep moral condemnation out of his analysis, although logically the oppressors, too, are products of the system. The ideologist must unmask the hidden structure and raise the consciousness of the now-passive victims so that they will share his "revelation." The world is divided into those who know and everyone else. Ideology is, then, essentially elitist, although its bearers see themselves as humble teachers of the truth.

In arguing with opponents, the ideologist does not behave like a scholar, who admits the fallibility of his reasoning and weighs evidence impartially. The ideologist uses *ad hominem* arguments and other illegitimate techniques of rhetoric to discredit his adversaries, for there can be no real debate with mouthpieces of the enemy or victims of false consciousness. In his effort to propagate the truth, the ideologist must take possession of the past, for ideology "turns history into a backdrop to liberation." Wherever ideologists have won power, however, they have instituted more tyranny than they have overthrown; "the charge that capitalist society suppresses all except capitalist ideas"—which of course is untrue—"is a blueprint for the censorship and control exercised by ideological societies."

The ideologists' goal of utopia is ambiguous. Being perfect, the future society must be static. But because it is to follow the liberation of humanity from alien constraints, it must be open to whatever changes free people bring about. A related ambiguity clouds ideological politics: "whereas the doctrine of ideology assumes that mankind is enslaved, politics is an activity of the free." Ideologues involved in politics still somehow interpret everything politically. They see politics as the clash of "interests," which are "ultimately derived from the structure of domination." Politics aims at compromise and temporary occupancy of office; ideologists work for one revolution, once and for all. The state is not neutral but an instrument of the dominant interest. Ideologues are confused at this point: they sometimes succeed in their campaigns for change, but "if popular pressure can achieve so much, what can it not achieve?"

Many readers will find these propositions (and Minogue's refutations) all too familiar. Yet Minogue's references to previous studies are scanty and sometimes misleading. He virtually ignores the contributions of Gordon Leff, Peter Berger, and my own *The Radical Persuasion, 1890-1917*, as well as important contributions by Gerhart Niemeyer and Eric Voegelin. I mention these omissions only to stress the difference between insights that depend on the accidental brilliance of a rare individual and those that are accessible to anyone with the requisite knowledge and interest. This difference has implications for the analysis of the epistemological question that Minogue explicitly recognizes as central to his project.

A substantive weakness of Minogue's critique derives from his perception of the relationship, in the ideologist's mind, between beliefs and emotion. Minogue says that the ideologist is dominated by his one ruling thought and insists on bringing every fact and event under that one rubric. Yet we all know people who believe in feminism or some other ideology but are not possessed by it and do not explain everything in its terms. We also know people who are *possessed* by what most people would ordinarily regard as sensible opinions—such as anticommunism—but who fail to display other traits on Minogue's list. Evidently, it is possible to embrace a nonideological belief-system in an ideological way, and an ideology in a nonideological way. Minogue's confusion on this point leads to uncertainty about American liberalism—whether it is or is not an ideology. (Throughout the book he uses "liberalism" in its European sense, as a Good Thing.) At one point he implies that "reformism" occupies a gray area or stopping-place between ideology and truth, but the question is left hanging.

Still another weakness is the failure to present opponents' arguments in their strongest forms and to anticipate their responses to his refutations. Since ideologies are polemical by nature, their defenses are integral parts of their very structures. As a former ideologist myself, I easily thought of replies to many of Minogue's refutations. Unfortunately, he did not present the rejoinders that would have strengthened his arguments. Moreover, he presents a Marx who could never have won millions of intelligent followers. He misstates Marx's theory of surplus value in four widely separated places in the book. Minogue's interpretation—that the worker's surplus product is *stolen* from him by his employer—was precisely the theory that Marx set out to refute. Marx proposed a "scientific" explanation in which the employer makes a profit after paying the worker the *full* value of the latter's labor power. The employer, according to Marx, owns the product the moment it comes into existence, and therefore cannot steal it from the worker, because the worker has sold him not the product but his labor power for a certain period. Minogue also ridicules Marx's statement that man makes his own history but within certain constraints on the grounds that Marx's "but" reveals the contradiction in environmental determinism. But every philosophy must grapple with this problem; the relationship between free will and external influences is more difficult, and Marx a more subtle thinker, than one would gather from Minogue's critique.

On other occasions, Minogue wins his arguments with ideologists by redefining their terms his way. For example: "freedom is the nonentity of the ideological terminus"—meaning (I

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think) that ideologists do not include freedom in their blueprints for the future. Since the ideologist defines both freedom and the terminus (the future good society) in quite different terms from Minogue's, he is substituting a syllogism that uses his own definitions for those of real ideologists. To score points off a straw man—or against second-rate or atypical thinkers, as Minogue occasionally does—is to weaken one's own position. I emphasize that I agree with his conclusions; I am arguing only that he has arrived at them by shortcuts that depict ideology as a far less formidable adversary than it is.

One reason ideology is so formidable is that it has the power to invade every department of life, thought, and action. Yet Minogue takes his examples from a surprisingly narrow range of fields: German philosophy, social science (focusing on the atypical Bertell Ollman, Ralph Miliband, and Henri Lefebvre), and feminist propaganda. His generalizations about ideology—that machine for generating doctrines encompassing all of reality—cry out for testing in other fields. For example, the fields of fiction and popular entertainment, which ideologists have invaded in force, display the same images of man and of the future (especially in science fiction), the same attitudes and assumptions, as in social science. But they give freer rein to the ideological imagination and often have more damaging consequences. The arts in general are both relevant to and absent from Minogue's analysis.

The book's other flaws are too numerous to elaborate upon. Some are problems of substance—e.g., while Marx put class relations in the base, Minogue thinks he made them part of the superstructure. Others are problems of form—e.g., names are misspelled; many points are repeated over and over and over; Lincoln issued something called The Emancipation "Edict"; Finley Peter Dunne's fictional Mister Dooley, the Chicago saloon keeper, seems to have become a real-life Tammany mayor of New York.

In politics, the Eleventh Commandment (that one should not speak ill of fellow-politicians on one's own side) may sometimes be justified. In scholarship it never is. The high praise that Minogue's book has received on the right, though perhaps due to a widespread ignorance of the relevant literature, may also, or instead, signify a lower standard for scholars who are on the same side than for others. Minogue has certainly proven, here and in his other writings, that he is a conservative. But conservatives no less than liberals need the best possible scholarship, and frank criticism is indispensable to our efforts to get it. As a long-time enemy of grade-inflation (which is a product of ideology), I cannot give the book more than a B-.

The Herd of Independent Minds *by Richard Kostelanetz*

"The bookful blockhead . . . [w]ith his own tongue still edifies his ears, / And always listening to himself appears."

—Alexander Pope

Stephen Berg: *Singular Voices*; Avon Books; New York; $9.95.

Behind Stephen Berg's *Singular Voices*, a new anthology of contemporary native poets writing about their own work, is the voice-theory of poetry, which holds that a poet is valuable not for his perception, his language, his formal skill or inventive intelligence, but the uniqueness of whatever "voice" is heard on the page. From this assumption follows Berg's claim that, since his book includes "living American poets whose work exemplifies strong new styles," their voices must therefore be indubitably singular.

To test this claim, I compiled the following sequence of opening sentences from the prose essays, using just less than two-thirds of the book's 30 "singular voices":

> Up in my eyrie-room atop the Chapel of the Madonna of Monserrato, perched on a cliff higher than the hawks above Lake Como, listening to the sweet bells of Bellagio's San Giacomo, I begin to cast into air and mind for an explanation of "Awakening," a poem written years ago in homage to the great Japanese Rinzai Zen master Hakuin. Sometimes I think communication is all we have—a voice like a silver wire extending through the dark or one chunk of flesh pressing against another chunk of flesh. I write prose poems when I long for intimacy. I want it from my friends, and I want it in poetry. The life in detail, the small moment, the texture of a thing—that, it has seemed to me, is where the poetry is. Poems begin when something in the present—event or object, word overheard—calls power to itself by association with something alive in the mind's recesses, some connection potent but unavailable to consciousness. The ideas that make a poem present themselves as images. My insights on what I perceive to be the themes of this poem are already expressed: the poem embodies them. Something you are writing, after it is done, or begins to feel close to done, you can lean over and breathe on it and try to bring its main moves, its trajectory, into the center of your

Richard Kostelanetz has published several books of poetry, in addition to a collection of his critical essays on poetry, The Old Poetries and the New *(University of Michigan).*

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attention. Usually my poems are very difficult for me to write. Poets often admit, with something like a parental sense of surprise, pride, pleasure, that once a poem is finished it becomes someone else's, becomes something else. Like many other writers of this century, my obsession has been with the lost and neglected forces of the world, what is dark and hidden, and unseen, although I'm not sure if my own passion is the result of political or psychological or religious impulses, or a particular combination of the three. There are aspects of the writer-reader relationship which sometimes drive a poet into apology and denial. Only a few months ago a graduate student at a Midwestern university sent me an elaborate commentary on an early poem of mine, requesting my seal of approval for his interpretation. This poem, "Recollection Long Ago: Sad Music," is literally a recollection. I find that many poems have a germ in a recollection, but this is as literal, even in detail, as recollection permits after some three score years have done their work. It is true that there was a brief period, three or four years perhaps, when I thought of myself as a Southern writer. Then, as young men in our twenties, we were quite besotted with poetry, writing it constantly, continually theorizing about it, and translating each other's work. "Elegy for N.N." was written in 1962 but for a long time it remained in manuscript, as I hesitated whether to publish it at all. Most of my life-as-a-poet I have avoided writing poems about paintings, pieces of sculpture, sonatas, or other people's choreography out of a Calvinistic sort of purism, thinking always that to give in to the impulse to embellish another's art diminishes rather than enhances it. "Klimt"

began on a day in Arcata, after
a long rain, the sun suddenly
blazing every wet thing.

As these 19 opening sentences go, so proceed whole essays, collectively realizing a certain uniformity of solemn, if not pompous, tone and diction (and even of subject, as Europe in some form appears in half of them). What we hear are cultivated Anglo-American voices quite familiar to us—indeed, the voices of teachers addressing students. It follows that most of these poets have been or are (or expect to be) professors of poetry at America's colleges. The spectacle reminds me of Harold Rosenberg's image of "the herd of independent minds."

Such uniformity is realized primarily by Berg's nearly total exclusion of poets who deviate from current classroom manners, not only in their poetry and prose. In his 30-person regiment, the only exceptions to this pervasive voice are Etheridge Knight (who remains the sole nonwhite contributor), Hayden Carruth (who contributes an arch dialogue), Carolyn Forché and Robert Haas (who both write as though they are addressing friends, rather than students). Indeed, to my senses, the principal unintended theme of *Singular Voices* is precisely the general inability of so many prominent American poets to realize a unique voice, let alone to think about transcending current fashion, not just in the writing about poetry but in writing of poetry itself; and it is precisely this artistic failure that, to me, dramatizes the continuing stasis, if not

In the forthcoming issue of *Chronicles*:

E Pluribus Unum

"Once we take account of the family, equal opportunity is an extraordinarily radical principle and achieving it would require sacrifices in liberty which most of us would regard as grossly illiberal."

—from "Equal Opportunity and the Limits of Liberalism"
by James S. Fishkin

ALSO

Thomas Reeves applies the touchstone of character to John Kennedy's administration

Richard Neuhaus examines the sobering condition of religion in American public life

Jay Mechling sees Indian reservations as a laboratory experiment in modernism

Allan Carlson listens in on Garrison Keillor's lover's quarrel with small-town USA

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decadence, of the American poetry scene.

The truths lost on these professor-poets are that success in academia requires acceptability, whereas success in art requires individuality that risks unacceptability, and then that success in the former does not guarantee success in the latter. This second truth accounts for why so many professor-poets nowadays are embittered about the lack of commensurate success for their poetry. Isn't this bitterness another sign of decadence?

Given Stephen Berg's evident ease in marshaling uniformity, it is not surprising that he neglects other parts of his editorial task. In the bio notes, he writes that Galway Kinnell "now runs the Columbia University Graduate Writing Program," whereas Kinnell actually teaches at NYU. Elsewhere the reader finds a Robert Penn Warren sentence that suffers from a missing word: "The scene is an evening picnic of college in a distant woodland." In the preface, Berg claims, "These poems and essays are also a substantial introduction to what is happening in American poetry today." Now a careful editor, especially of such a narrow-minded book, would have removed that sort of disingenuous claim that was initially made, one suspects, to impress commercial publishers (and their sales managers). Reprinted here, a puff so false becomes outrageous and, need I say, infuriating. cc

The Sheriff and the Goatman *by Fred Chappell*

"May not a man have several voices . . . as well as two complexions?"

—Nathaniel Hawthorne

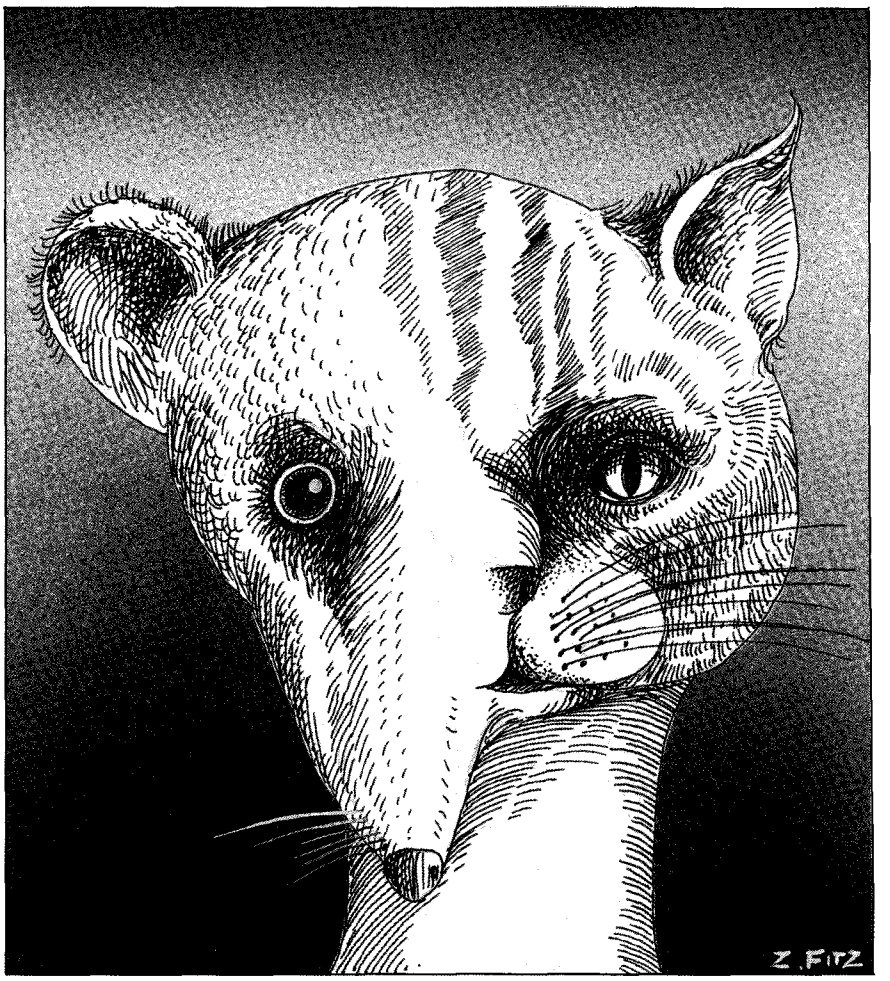
George Garrett: *An Evening Performance: New and Selected Short Stories*; Doubleday; New York; $18.95.

Peter Taylor: *The Old Forest and Other Stories*; Doubleday; New York; $16.95.

In George Garrett's stories the conflict often arises between a wild lone Outsider and a generally conscientious but insecure Establishment figure; in Peter Taylor's stories the conflict is likely to take place between generations, the revolt of the young against their elders.

The conflicts are similar in some respects, for in neither case is there a total rejection of values on either side. Garrett's establishment figures often recognize the better qualities in their opposing loners, the desire for adventure, the strange angry pride and fierce refusal of society's ordinary comforts. Taylor's youths will often agree with the basic tenets of their parents and grandparents, but are impatient with the smug manner in which these customs are presented and with the hypocrisy by which they are maintained. The old values are quite clear in emotional outline; in "The Scoutmaster" Taylor represents many of them in a single figure:

> He stood before us like a gigantic replica of all the little boys on the benches, half ridiculous and half frightening to me in his girlish khaki middy and with his trousers disappearing beneath heavy three-quarter woolen socks. In that cold, bare, bright room he was saying that it was one of our great misfortunes to have



Fred Chappell is a novelist and co-winner of the 1985 Bollingen Poetry Prize. His most recent book is I Am One of You Forever *(LSU).*

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> been born in these latter days when the morals and manners of the country had been corrupted, born in a time when we could see upon the members of our own families—upon our sisters and brothers and aunts and uncles—the effects of our failure to cling to the teachings and ways of our forefathers. And he was saying that it was our duty and great privilege, as Boy Scouts, to preserve those honorable things which were left from the golden days when a race of noble gentlemen and gracious ladies inhabited the land of the South. He was saying that we must preserve them until one day we might stand with young men from all over the nation to demand a return to the old ways and the old teachings everywhere.

Noble sentiments these, and hard to fault in abstract terms. But their articulation is occasioned by the scoutmaster's late discovery of a little harmless parlor petting on the part of his niece and her boyfriend. Part of the irony lies in the uncle's doleful overreaction to a breach of decorum. Another much darker irony is in the fact that these same sentiments were used to justify the formation of the Ku Klux Klan.

There are some fine similarities between Taylor's scoutmaster and Garrett's Sheriff Riddle in "Noise of Strangers." In this story the sheriff finds himself in familiar battle with the town drunk, an eccentric creature known as the Goatman:

> The Sheriff is . . . the chosen protector of his little world, the elected hero who must go forth to battle dragons and dark knights for them all while the townspeople live quiet and secure in the vague shine of the hidden treasure —respectability. He sees himself as a lone sentry protecting the chaste virtue of those fine houses along the main street. Within may be madness, despair, rage, and the seven deadly sins guarding a captive princess, but he is concerned only with the public world. The Goatman is a fool without cap and bells, who is somehow needed to question the values of disguise and appearance. He is respectability turned inside out. *I, too, am Man*, he says. *See for yourself.*

Both of them are "half ridiculous and half frightening," but neither the scoutmaster nor the sheriff is entirely obtuse. Though they see themselves as embattled defenders of a status quo, neither takes a glorious view of himself nor has much confidence in the ultimate rightness of things as they are. A strong strain of professionalism sustains Taylor's self-appointed aristocracy as well as Garrett's self-appointed Red Cross Knights, but they are all fatalists at heart and have grayly resigned themselves to an inevitable collapse of the order they uphold.

In Garrett's "Texarkana Was a Crazy Town," the professional soldier finds the civilian world a convocation of murderous lunatics; in "Unmapped Country," a captain is almost unmanned by the naked sorrow of a remote hill farmer; in "Song of a Drowning Sailor," a seaman's ghost is befuddled by the mores of small-town society. Easy to draw similarities between these stories and some of Taylor's—"A Walled Garden," for instance, and "The Old Forest" and "The Little Cousins." When Katherine Anne Porter, some decades ago, pointed out George Garrett and Peter Taylor as the two younger short story writers she had most faith in, she may have noticed their predilections for one of the themes she preferred in her own work: the conflict between the newfledged independent spirit and customary authority and the eventual sad bargains they strike with one another. This is in some respects a Russian theme, memorably treated by Turgenev and Chekhov as well as by Dostoevski; but Taylor and Garrett are careful localizers. Garrett is indelibly American, in some specialized senses of the term; Taylor is relentlessly Southern.

But there are important differences.

Garrett is, from a long way off, a recognizable troublemaker. His prankishness, his genial skepticism, his cheerful range of grotesque characters, mark him as something of a Pan figure, some kin to his Goatman. These qualities may distract attention from his deep conservative tendency, which is partly a product of his traditionalism and humane admiration of civilization itself. The status quo may be broadly corrupt, its foundations may be shaky or even rotten, its mechanical practices may result in injustice and cruelty —but it has been *achieved*; it nurtures and protects the greater mass of people, and its generous inefficiency enables it to produce and tolerate its wayward proud troubadours and mountebanks.

The opposite misperception operates upon Taylor. Because so many of his stories take place in an upper-class setting, because there is such flutter about decorum and good manners, because of the formal tone of his prose, his work is often seen as actually embodying the good traits of Southern gentility. But in truth his whole career has been one of steady subversion. His ethic is revolutionary in the setting he has chosen, and his irony unremitting and unremorseful. He has a Jamesian talent for being a somehow unobtrusive skeleton at the feast, and his stance is closely related to that of the morally severe Miss Bluemeyer in "The Death of a Kinsman." Miss Bluemeyer's genuine standards of charity are so alien to those of the blithely respectable Mrs. Wade that the latter has to question her mental balance. "Oh, could a sane person possibly have been so critical and questioning of a happy family life?"

It is as if, in the minds of many readers, the respective positions of Taylor and Garrett had simply got switched about.

But this is no great matter. Passing time will clarify momentary confusions and also correct the mistakes I make in my estimate here. The likenesses and contrasts I have drawn between them might be drawn between any two writers of first rank. What is certain is that time shall preserve the work of these two and shall discard the work of other contemporary short story writers who are now more obtrusively in the public eye, less profoundly in the public mind. cc

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COMMENDABLES

In Turbulent Seas

by Tommy W. Rogers

Otto Scott: *The Other End of the Lifeboat*; Regnery Books; Chicago; $18.95.

Robert Ruark has nothing on Otto Scott for ability to provide simultaneous political commentary and African travelogue. A careful historian and shrewd observer with the ability to set forth his observations with apt parsimony, Scott has written a book eclectic in sweep, including incisive commentary on the state of Western morality, media and culture, and pious chicanery. Scott is a master at describing the links between the events and the undergirding ideas of time past and time present. His account and contemporary vignettes of South Africa—pleasant train travel, music as if it were the 1950's, radio reported as decidedly more literary than the U.S. counterpart, "women [who] seemed, with their soft voices and careful grooming, more feminine than ours," lunch at the Blue Room in the Johannesburg railway station and the Lanzerac in Stellenbosch, landscapes that at times appeared to be in a time capsule of their own—prove as engaging as a work of imaginative fiction, yet are firmly rooted in a perilous reality.

Scott has the ability to rightly connect events and to delineate the phenomenology of common events which might appear disparate. He understands especially how a failure of American nerve since World War II and a naive willingness to help the Soviets dismantle colonialism have exposed millions to the tyranny of communist despots. The USSR is today embarked on a course of unmistakable imperialism, seeking to incorporate the critical geography and vital mineral resources of Africa into the Soviet Empire. The same patterns of thinking which made it palatable to join with the Soviet barbarians in reducing the global power of other Western nations make it easy to regard South Africa as *the* evil spot of the contemporary world. That South Africa has no Untouchables, is a land of remarkable economic progress for Blacks (where the traveler moves freely and the press is among the freest in the world and where Blacks are fleeing *to* for the advantages of comparative economic prosperity and political justice), is the most advanced region in Africa, and is the most tolerant in religion—all this is wholly irrelevant to those who cannot bear the thought of confronting Soviet might. Nor is it regarded as important that South Africa has no single Black majority, but contains 48 Black tribes and languages and respects their autonomy for racial separateness, traditions, and culture in an integrated society of their own.

Not long ago Rhodesia succumbed to the combined effect of Western pressure, Chinese bankrolling of Mugabe, and Soviet support for Nkomo. But as soon as Black rule was established, U.S. taxpayers were hit for $225 million to support the new state. Tribal massacres under Mugabe stir no more ripple in the American press than did the plight of the Vietnamese boat people. When the push for African independence reached the take-off point in 1960, Africa produced 95 percent of its own food. Today every African nation except the Republic of South Africa exists on the eleemosynary tolerance of the white-ruled world. The independent African nations "are today free mainly in the sense that their rulers can murder them without having to face European justice." Modern Africa demonstrates that odious dictatorship and tribal turmoil and cruelty are the predictable consequences of Western support of leftist regimes.

The double standard that exonerates corruption and brutality among Blacks and leftists but condemns white South Africans for lesser offenses makes sense only when we understand the hubris of egalitarian ideologues and only when we acknowledge the decadence of the West.

Having emerged in the postwar world as global social worker, busybody, ineffectual policeman, and bag woman of the world, the United States has demonstrated so little respect for the differences among mankind that its leaders have assumed that the nouveau states would assume a "democratic" pattern. The American colonial separation from Britain was accomplished within the cultural context of a Reformation lineage which ensured freedom in the midst of order. The notion that decolonized areas with entirely different cultural histories would adopt the American pattern has proved to be an ideological illusion.

History shows us the unfolding, the working out, and the denouement of the beliefs by which men live. The Enlightenment *philosophes* dreamed of earthly utopia and opposed all colonization, but the bloody course of the French Revolution exposed the groundlessness of their basic assumptions. Today the continuing conflict between the Reformational and Enlightenment lineages continues in South Africa. South Africa is not perfect, and legalism has doubtless overstepped liberty. Scott reports that a majority of the Afrikaners themselves feel apartheid is too rigid and causes too many individual hardships. But for the Afrikaners, the essential features of their government and their way of life are justified by Calvinist doctrine.

By consistently refusing to distinguish between its friends and its enemies, the United States has dangerously isolated itself. We send grain to the masters of the Gulag while we debate what penalties should be imposed on South Africa. The moral sclerosis is so advanced that several years ago the Carnegie Endowment for Peace, no less, drafted contingency plans for the destruction of the Republic of South Africa by military force.

South Africa does have its internal problems. The government has shortsightedly adopted many of the same sort of social programs which have been so disastrous in the United States. Theft by redistribution does not appear to work any better in South Africa. South Africa is also not without the influence of its own septicemic intelligentsia and free-thinking theologians, many of whom Scott has interviewed. How much internal change, if any, the Afrikaners should make in their country, and by what methods and for what purposes, is probably open for question. But it remains a fact of contemporary reality that South Africa and the United

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States are both afloat on the high seas of world history in the same lifeboat. That sea will not be calmed by pushing yet another sacrificial victim over the side.

Tommy W. Rogers, an instructor of sociology (in exile from the collegial fellowship of the academy), writes from Jackson, Mississippi, where he is a drone in a governmental apparatus.

The Criminal Type

by Michael A. Fumento

James Q. Wilson and Richard J. Herrnstein: *Crime and Human Nature*; Simon and Schuster; New York.

Iconoclasm is the poor man's intellectualism. Challenge a traditional way of thinking and you can vault yourself instantly into the celebrity spotlight, with lucrative publishing deals, testimonies before congressional committees, and interviews on *Good Morning America*. Since the 1960's the iconoclasts have held sway in the study of criminal behavior, ignoring important studies done in the 1940's and before for no reason except that they didn't fit their theories for the New Age. Now two Harvard professors have issued a comprehensive compilation of studies on criminology refuting the fantasies of the iconoclasts and confirming what we have always innately believed about criminals and criminal behavior.

Written by political scientist James Q. Wilson and psychologist Richard J. Herrnstein, *Crime and Human Nature* reads like a commonsense guide to criminology. We are told, for instance, that there *is* a criminal "type." He is a young male, with a lower-than-average I.Q., and a mesomorphic (muscular) body type. And yes, there even seems to be a slight correlation between facial characteristics and the type of crime committed. More fundamentally, the criminal has a short time horizon which makes him impulsive and unwilling to postpone gratification. It may be unsettling to hear that many criminal characteristics are constitutional, but they should not be ignored simply because "nothing can be done" about them. As the authors point out, "First of all, a constitutional factor merely makes a person somewhat more likely to display a certain behaviour; it does not make it inevitable. There is no evidence for the existence of a 'crime gene.'" "Second, helping a person who is constitutionally more at risk is only possible if we look for those predisposing factors early in life."

How early? Very. Since the 1960's the schools have emphasized their own centrality in the socialization process. But despite the public service campaigns bombarding teenagers with the slogan "Don't be a fool; stay in school!" there is evidence that teenagers who want to drop out are probably better off doing so. In fact, Wilson and Herrnstein cite evidence that by the time the child is in school most of the good or harm has already been done. We are told that "there is little chance of an affectional bond between mother and infant forming if the infant is deprived of a mother figure during the first three or three and a half years of life." The authors note that if a "bond never forms the consequences can be very severe" resulting "in a personality characterized by the lack of guilt, an inability to keep rules and an inability to form lasting relationships," all of which lead to criminal behavior. It is now believed that "adults other than the biological mother may serve as suitable objects of this attachment." However, in today's "superwoman" society where career-oriented mothers often dump their children in day-care centers within a few weeks after birth and where half of all women in the labor force have children under the age of three, this is clearly cause for concern.

There is much more bad news here for the New Agers. It appears there is no substitute for morality—not the relativistic sort of "morality" celebrated today but the old-fashioned public type practiced long before "If it feels good, do it" became a popular motto and before the "Me generation" took "Do your own thing" as its slogan. Groups dedicated to strengthening traditional public morality, especially temperance groups, seem to have had a substantial positive impact on the incidence of crime.

The research here compiled also indicates that there's no substitute for old-fashioned swift, certain punishment. Not only are criminal penalties these days usually less severe than formerly, and imposed more slowly, but they are also much less certain to be applied at all. For a young man with a short time horizon who acts out of impulse, delayed and light punishments reduce the cost of crime. As crime becomes cheaper, the incidence increases. Few shoppers can resist a bargain.

Far less certain than the link between lax imposition of punishment and high crime rates are the supposed links between crime and unemployment and racial prejudice. As Wilson and Herrnstein note: "During the 1960s [Chinatown] in San Francisco had the lowest income, the highest unemployment rate, and the highest proportion of substandard housing of any area of the city. Yet in 1965 there were only five persons of Chinese ancestry committed to prison in the entire state of California." Lest one think the Chinese are anomalous, the Japanese are also greatly underrepresented among the criminal population. So far as Blacks are concerned, the one study available shows that West Indian natives —indistinguishable physically from the native American Blacks who share their New York ghettos—were underrepresented in the state's prison population while native American Blacks were substantially overrepresented.

Wilson and Herrnstein believe that *Crime and Human Nature* is not "an argument from which many (possibly any) clear policy recommendations can be deduced," but the authors sell themselves short. The replacement of moral relativism with more traditional teaching in the public schools, swifter and surer punishment in the courts, emphasis on the early rather than the middle years of a child's development in all discussions of social legislation —all of these are clearly suggested. This volume deserves to have a tremendous impact on the way we perceive crime and combat its causes. cc

Michael Fumento is the former editor of Illini Review *at the University of Illinois.*

IN FOCUS

Utopian on the Dole

by William C. Rice

P.M.: *Bolo'Bolo*; Semiotext(e)/ Columbia University; New York.

An afternoon's reading of *Bolo'Bolo* by "P.M." leaves the reader wondering what the New York State Council on the Arts is doing giving public money to Columbia University to publish such books. A futuristic utopian tract, *Bolo-'Bolo* is as inane as it is self-indulgent. Its author, P.M., a slave to every cliché of the untutored stylist, boldly decries (a la Parisian literary theory) the "deal" the "Planetary Work Machine" has wrought upon us whilst it builds on "its

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inner contradictions to expand its control and to refine its instruments." Desperately, "every worker makes his or her own little extra-deal, depending on particular job and specific situation," but then all "has been standardized, rationalized, anonymized." What, alas, can be done? P.M. advocates the destruction of industry and the state through sabotage and violence.

The new order will lead to "direct relations of material exchange between farmers and city-dwellers," who will adopt a new language—"a strictly subjective . . . reality of dreams"—that P.M. has conveniently outlined in his (or her) text(e). The reader must wend his way through the twisted prose of "trico" and "taku," of "kana," "yalu," "pali," and "tega," each symbolic of the simplified transactions of the new age. P.M.'s cuneiform economics, after 20 or 30 pages, ceases to be amusing; it becomes an overwrought bore, and the reader marvels only at the perseverance of even the proofreader (who, incidentally, appears to have neglected his work).

Now all this is too pathetic to be offensive, so why grouse? If a stray overeducated Manhattanite envisions a mind-numbing utopia, surely that's no cause for indignation. But there remains the question of how the New York State Council on the Arts spends tax money. Were there a State Council on Political Utopias (and the idea is probably now in committee somewhere), P.M. might legitimately apply to them for public largesse. But *Bolo'Bolo* deserves no consideration as art, not even as that dubious sort of "political art" so abundant today. No matter how capricious and bizarre our aesthetic standards have become, I can only wonder what justification the dons at Columbia University had in mind when they brought out *Bolo'Bolo* with public money intended for the arts. Taxpayers are entitled to an explanation. cc

William C. Rice is a fiction writer in Philadelphia.

M·O·V·I·N·G·?

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Between São Paulo and Tel Aviv

by Edward S. Shapiro

Sol M. Linowitz: *The Making of a Public Man: A Memoir*; Little, Brown; Boston; $19.95.

Sol M. Linowitz's autobiography tells once again the classic story of the successful American. Son of a middle-class Jewish wholesale fruit dealer from New Jersey who was impoverished by the Great Depression, Linowitz attended Hamilton College on a partial scholarship, financing the rest of his education by waiting on tables, working in the college library, and selling Christmas cards. He graduated as class salutatorian and received a scholarship to the Cornell University Law School. While studying law, he continued to wait on tables, played violin in an orchestra, and held a job funded by the National Youth Administration. He also was editor-in-chief of the *Cornell Law Quarterly* and in 1938 graduated first in his class. He then joined a small but prominent Rochester law firm. During World War II, Linowitz worked for the Office of Price Administration and served in the Navy. In 1945, he returned to Rochester to practice law, became involved in Rochester civic activities, and formed a close friendship with Joe Wilson, a prominent Rochester businessman and scion of one of the city's first families. This relationship with Wilson was to bring Linowitz fame, fortune, and power.

Wilson was president of Haloid Corporation, a manufacturer of photographic papers and machines which operated in the shadow of Rochester's major firm, the Eastman Kodak Company. When Wilson hired Linowitz, the Haloid Corporation was feverishly attempting to develop a new copier based on the scientific work of Chester Carlson, a then-unknown inventor. Haloid, of course, soon became the Xerox Corporation, while Carlson's copier eventually became the Xerox 914, one of the most socially significant and profitable inventions in American history.

Initially Linowitz handled Haloid's licensing and patent development legal work. In 1959 he became chairman of the company's executive committee, with responsibility for government relations, acquisitions, and international ventures. In 1961, when Haloid became Xerox, Linowitz was named chairman of the board and later became chairman of Xerox International. Hoping to develop a Latin American market, he traveled to South America in 1965 to recruit potential partners and to meet government officials. Fascinated with the continent's vitality and enterprise and troubled by the region's problems, Linowitz accepted an appointment by Lyndon Johnson in 1966 to be both ambassador to the Organization of American States and the American representative to the Inter-American Committee of the Alliance for Progress. A decade later Jimmy Carter selected him to negotiate new arrangements with Panama regarding the Canal. The two chapters devoted to the Panama Canal treaties are by far the most valuable ones in Linowitz's memoir. Linowitz's final government service was as Personal Representative of the President for the Middle East Peace Negotiations in 1979-80, when he unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate an agreement between Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin on the question of Palestinian political autonomy.

The Making of a Public Man is remarkably reticent, though, regarding the inner workings of the Xerox Corporation, the making of American foreign policy, and Linowitz's own private life. (As an aside, he does mention that he had the good sense to reject the presidencies of three unnamed universities.) In part, this reticence is intentional. Linowitz does not believe in kiss-and-tell memoirs. It "would impinge upon the necessary trust between attorney and client," he argues, "if I were to describe in the context of personal memoirs the work I have done as a lawyer for particular clients." What we have instead is the public life of a liberal businessman and part-time ambassador.

Linowitz believes in all the liberal pieties, including the Alliance for Prog-

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ress, the United Nations, the Great Society, Saul Alinsky, and the National Urban Coalition. But he concludes his book on a pessimistic note. "The last few years have not been encouraging for people of my views. . . . In the perspective of history, today's disillusionments may well appear as a necessary corrective to the naive hopes and overblown plans of our old optimism." An examination of these "naive hopes and overblown plans" would have added spice to these rather thin and disappointing reminiscences by a man who was present at some of the most important and exciting economic and diplomatic events of the past 30 years. cc

Edward S. Shapiro is professor of history at Seton Hall University.

Inside Jokes

by Arthur M. Eckstein

Orwell: The Lost Writings; Edited by W.J. West; Arbor House; New York; $20.00.

From August 1941 until November 1943, George Orwell served as the producer and writer of a radio talk show beamed by the BBC out to India. Physically unfit for army duty, he considered the job to be his way of "doing his bit" in the war against Hitler. The image of Orwell as a chief of propaganda is ironic—and was ironic to Orwell himself. He stood the job as long as he could, but eventually resigned, taking up instead a much more congenial position as literary editor for the independent left-wing magazine *Tribune*. For some 40 years, the work Orwell did at the BBC was lost in the disreputably haphazard BBC archives (priceless voice-recordings of Orwell at work were also destroyed by the BBC bureaucracy during the 1950's, as part of an economy measure). But last year William West, an amateur Orwellian, accomplished what no professional Orwell scholar has been able to do: rediscover the BBC scripts. Much of it had been filed, for some reason, under the name of one of the Indian ladies responsible for reading over the air some of the scripts Orwell wrote.

West has now published in America the first batch of the recovered material under the pretentious title *The Lost Writings*. But Orwell had explicitly discounted the value of much of what he wrote at the BBC, and frankly, this first selection (consisting of radio-essays on general political and literary topics) is disappointing. Some of the new material is simplistic (not false) propaganda aimed at the Indian audience. Worse, West has chosen to include many of the memos Orwell wrote in the course of the tedious and complex business of setting up topics for broadcast, and the fixing of the various physical arrangements necessary for the broadcasts themselves. It is disconcerting to learn that Orwell the bureaucrat reads like any other bureaucrat. There are, of course, some small jewels in all this dross: a fine essay on Bernard Shaw, an

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imaginary 1942 interview between Orwell and his literary hero Jonathan Swift (in which Orwell, latterly famous for his alleged pessimism, distinguishes himself from the Dean on the basis of optimism). Yet it is the dross which, unfortunately, predominates in this volume. Perhaps the promised second volume (a collection of commentaries on the events of the war, which Orwell wrote for weekly broadcasts to India) will have more material of substance.

Actually, by far the most interesting part of *The Lost Writings* is not written by Orwell but by West. In a long and scholarly introduction, West argues that despite the standard view, Orwell made good use of his time at the BBC: these were not "lost years." Orwell learned to turn out written work at a very fast clip (which helps account for the marked increase in his literary production after 1943); and preparing for the literary broadcasts gave him time to read (or read again) many of the classics of English writing. I do not think there can be much doubt that the Orwell who emerged from the BBC was a much more self-confident person than the man who went to work there two and a half years before—perhaps not least because he had (for the first time since the 1920's) held a steady and demanding job for a long period, and had done well at it.

But West also argues that Orwell's experience within the BBC bureaucracy forms the model and sets the tone for the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Other critics—looking for a way to discuss Orwell's greatest work without mentioning the Soviet Union—have pushed this hypothesis much farther than West does. Here the informed reader is compelled to dissent. There can be no doubt now, thanks to West's researches, that certain aspects of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* turn out to be inside jokes. The sinister Ministry of Truth where Winston Smith works—that vast, pyramidical building—is clearly modeled on the wartime headquarters building of the Ministry of Information (and hence of the BBC): namely, the Senate Building of the University of London! The telegraphic address of this building was, during the war, MINIFORM (Ministry of Information)—a chilling parallel to Winston Smith's MINITRUE. The Minister of Information during Orwell's time at the BBC was Mr. Brendan Bracken, and MOI internal memos consistently refer to this man as "B.B."—precisely as the internal memos at Winston Smith's MINITRUE refer to Big Brother. And there was even a major fad at the BBC for C.K. Ogden's simplified language called "Basic English" (Orwell himself commissioned a radio-essay on it); the relationship here to Orwell's notorious "Newspeak" is obvious.

It is good to know these inside jokes. But West pushes the parallel between Oceania and the BBC too far. A case in point is West's suggestion that Oceania's all-pervasive system of telescreen supervision has its origins in Orwell's fears that microphones might be left on in BBC studios, so that private conversations were accidentally overheard. This is patently ridiculous: there is not the slightest evidence that Orwell ever worried about microphones at the BBC being accidentally left on; the parallel does not work because Orwell's telescreens are both intentional and all-pervasive (unlike accidentally active microphones at the BBC); and the obvious source for the pervasive telescreens of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is Orwell's knowledge of the pervasiveness of secret police systems in certain countries, a problem which we *know* worried him very deeply.

Towards the end of his introductory essay, West himself seems to realize that the context and the meaning of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are larger and

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more complicated than Orwell's relationship to his experiences at the BBC and that the inside jokes about the BBC may actually form only one of the more shallow layers of that multilayered work. For in relation to the larger issues which Britain and the rest of the world *outside* the BBC faced in the 1940's, West does see *Nineteen Eighty-Four* for what it certainly is—a bitter assault, by a man of the left, on left-wing totalitarianism and antihumanism.

There is more to come from William West on Orwell, both as editor of the new Orwell material and as a literary and political commentator on Orwell himself. Orwell's lost writings are a disappointment so far—they will be of limited interest even to Orwell scholars—but West's introduction, at least, is worth the read. We await the publications of his other rediscovered Orwell material with anticipation. cc

Arthur Eckstein is professor of history at the University of Maryland.

Best-Sellers & Brown-Baggers

by Andrei Navrozov

Mary Bringle: *Hacks at Lunch: A Novel of the Literary Life*; St. Martin's Press; New York; $11.95.

It is tempting to say that Mary Bringle's *Hacks at Lunch* was written by a hack—at lunch or otherwise engaged. But so laconic a pronouncement would leave the reviewer open to charges of disingenuousness and flippancy; and, since some such judgment cannot be substantively avoided, it must be elucidated and qualified.

The premise of this "novel of the literary life," as Miss Bringle's book is subtitled, is that "hacks" (i.e., "professional writers" who produce, usually pseudonymously, pulp novels of mystery, romance, and adventure) deserve our pity because they cannot belong to that other world, at once glamorous and serious, where authors sign their books with their real names and get reviewed by the *New York Times*. As may be expected, Miss Bringle's method echoes Hugo's *Les Miserables*, and as the personalities, or souls, of the four "hacks" in her tale are revealed through their lunchtime words and thoughts, the author wishes to lead us through pity to pathos.

It is not to be. Miss Bringle's pathos is false because the magical, highbrow world in which her subjects want to partake is her own dream as well. Its goodness is axiomatic; and literature, like life, abhors the axiom (as did Hugo, for that matter). We do not pity the "hacks," whose "literary life" the subtitle mocks, so much as the author, whose literary and social aspirations, or perhaps delusions, the novel unwittingly discloses. Obviously, it has never occurred to Miss Bringle that the difference between "pulp" as defined by her characters and "literature" as defined by the *New York Times* may be not one of talent but of vocabulary, and one wonders if her mind could accept the proposition that a writer of genuine sensibility may find the very prospect of publication, in the existing literary climate, repugnant, quite apart from Emily Dickinson's interdiction concerning publication in general as "the Auction / Of the Mind of Man."

Literature—not highbrow drivel or lowbrow pulp—is largely a matter of understanding. Like the translator of a text, a writer who sets out to describe a world must be moved by his talent to understand it. If he does, he can express himself in sign language if necessary; if

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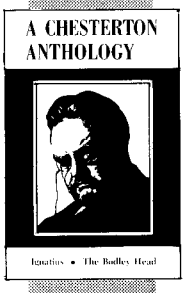

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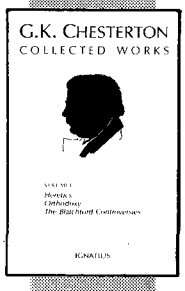

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he does not, all striving is useless, and he might as well write books like *Fiona's Folly*, the steamy novel by one of the characters in *Hacks at Lunch*, the highbrow novel by Mary Bringle. In either case, a pseudonym seems like a good idea. cc

Andrei Navrozov is editor of The Yale Literary Magazine *and a contributing editor of* Harper's.

Forget This Alamo

by Stephen L. Tanner

Ernest Brawley: *The Alamo Tree*; Simon and Schuster; New York.

This is the kind of novel that inspires slick reviewers and writers of publisher's blurbs to new outrages in inflated but tacky description: "lusty," "brawling," "pulsing with ambition," "passion and greed," "an epic saga."

The story begins in Mexico in 1927, with flashbacks going back to the turn of the century, and ends in 1982. Set mostly in Mexico with a few excursions north of the border, it relates the vicissitudes and intertwinings of three generations of two families—the O'Hares and Carrizos—one American, one Mexican. Maureen O'Hare (the touch of Irish in such novels is supposed to contribute spirit and passion) begins as the owner of a seedy hotel in a small Mexican town. With the help of her daughter, with whom she has a stormy love-hate relationship, she develops luxurious resort hotels in Acapulco. Her erstwhile servant, Gallo Carrizo, master of the Mexican style of bribery and double-dealing, ultimately becomes a tycoon and governor of a Mexican state. His nephew and Maureen's daughter marry to form another of the passionate but perverted sexual relationships that characterize the novel.

Brawley spent his youth as an agricultural worker in California, a railroad switchman, and a guard at San Quentin prison and has lived for extended periods in Mexico and Argentina. He crams in an appeal to many interests: Mexican history, family saga, sex (mostly kinky), violence (in gruesome detail), lives of the wealthy and powerful, primitive Indian customs and beliefs, international drug smuggling, and the cause of the oppressed. He is a good storyteller and provides abundant variety in character and incident. But no important themes are developed in a consistent, penetrating, or significant way. Early into the novel, one realizes with a sinking feeling that the idosyncratic and often engaging characters, the singular incidents, the abundant and quirky sex are there as ends in themselves and will not work together to shape or illuminate our vision of human experience. The ultimate effect is a titillation of our shallower curiosities. cc

Stephen L. Tanner is professor of English at Brigham Young University.

Star of David

by Paul Salstrom

Jehuda Reinharz: *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Zionist Leader*; Oxford University Press; New York; $29.95.

As Israel becomes increasingly important in world affairs, Jews and non-Jews alike increasingly want to understand the origins of the Israeli state and of the Zionist movement. This is volume one of the first scholarly biography of Chaim Weizmann. It provides a thoroughly researched account of how a Russian Jew from the Pale of Settlement came to be, by age 40 (when World War I began and this volume of the biography ends), a leading Zionist and the possessor of the patent for a crucial process in manufacturing explosives.

Weizmann did not exactly trade his patent for the Balfour Declaration, which in 1918 promised British help toward making Palestine "a national home for the Jewish people." Immediately after World War I erupted, Weizmann gave his patent to the British government *gratis*. By that time he had lived in England for 10 years and been a British subject for four years. In 1916, when Lloyd George became prime minister, Weizmann was appointed director of naval laboratories. But Weizmann did wring every advantage he could for Zionism from his crucial role as a munitions chemist. Not only the Balfour Declaration but the eventual creation of Israel probably owes more to Weizmann than has been acknowledged.

Jehuda Reinharz does not paint an especially flattering portrait of the young Weizmann, though, showing repeatedly how Weizmann allowed his relations with Theodore Herzl, Menahem Ussishkin, and other leading Zionist leaders to be governed by sheer opportunism and transparent obsequiousness. Still, most readers will admire Weizmann's tenacious perseverance during his formative years. Weizmann was far from stable in his emotional life, yet he was able to restrain his impulses and keep a cool head. In political dealings he was always patient but also always watchful, ready to exploit any opening. Even before opposing Herzl's proposal in 1903 for a Jewish state in Africa, Weizmann led a faction opposed to Herzl's elitist way of operating —a "Democratic Faction" through which Weizmann, Martin Buber, and a few others tried to control Herzl's secret negotiations with the Ottoman Sultan. The "Democratic Faction" failed to control Herzl, but it did set a precedent for the creation of factions and subfactions within the World Zionist Organization—some of which almost drove Weizmann to distraction during his own tenure as president of the WZO (1920-1931 and 1935-1946).

Professor Reinharz offers a complete and balanced representation of all aspects of his subject's life, even when treating such delicate matters as Weizmann's treatment of his first fiancée, Sophia Getzova, with whom he had intimate relations on the understanding they would be married but whom he abruptly dropped when the more beautiful Vera Khatzman crossed his path. This incident, like others, is presented starkly and yet without judgmental commentary. Many readers will probably empathize with Weizmann and Vera, for their long courtship (conducted largely by mail) is treated with restrained sensitivity. Reinharz resists the temptation of psychohistory throughout.

The author's primary focus remains political, however. Only his mastery of Zionist history makes possible a biography so fully documented, so fully to the point. Master of a lucid prose, Reinharz relates the story of Zionism's struggling adolescence before World War I in a style both engaging and thoroughly readable. Readers will finish the book looking forward to the volumes yet to come. cc

Paul Salstrom teaches history at Brandeis University.

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The Best Is Yet to Be

The "problem" of the elderly in America is turning into a major industry for the social sciences. Much of the discussion turns on the supposed mistreatment the old receive in the country of the young. Pop gerontologists portray the plight of the elderly: poor, sick, abandoned by their children, stigmatized by society as ugly, sexless, and powerless. The third edition of *Growing Old in America: New Perspectives on Old Age* (edited by Beth Barless and Elizabeth W. Markson; Transaction Books; New Brunswick, NJ) helps to dispel many of the old myths.

The old consensus on aging, based on the "modernization theory," blamed the problem on industrialization, which broke up the old multigenerational households, divided the elderly from their children, and abandoned them to the tender mercies of the modern state. In recent years, the modernization theory has come under attack from many quarters. Historians like Peter Laslett have demonstrated convincingly that the multigenerational household was never a standard pattern in Britain or America, while Michael Anderson has shown that in 19th-century Lancashire, at least, the elderly in cities were more likely to reside with relatives than in the country. Other researchers have exploded the idea of an honorable old age in traditional societies. As Corinne Nydegger points out in this volume, old age *per se* is very rarely valued, decrepitude never: it is the wealth, power, and special skills possessed by some old people that confer high status upon them.

All this revisionism is a welcome corrective so long as it is not taken at face value. Consider Laslett's now universally accepted argument against multigenerational residence. What it demolishes is, to a great extent, a straw man. The older standard view was not so much that several generations lived in the same house but in close enough proximity for them to lend each other mutual support and comfort. Besides, as Guy Lee argues, census data indicate that "at the turn of the century over sixty percent of the elderly . . . lived with at least one child; the comparable figure for 1970 was about eighteen percent."

The aged may never have had especially high prestige in our civilization, but historian Brian Grattan provides evidence enough to suggest a significant decline. Consider the ways in which people lie about their age. Like Jack Benny, many people continue to report themselves as 39 (or 49) long after they have turned the corner. In 18th-century America, however, "Instead of excess number of persons stating that they are 39, or 49, excess numbers report themselves 41 or 51." Grattan concludes that "the view Americans took toward age was utterly different in the late eighteenth century."

Are the elderly really poor and neglected in America? In an excellent introductory essay, Beth B. Hess provides a balanced discussion: White males do rather well, others not especially, although the incidence of poverty among those over 65 is only 14 percent—just slightly higher than the overall average of 11.4 percent—but most of them have been poor all their lives; age is not the reason. Besides, 70 percent of the elderly own homes, and four-fifths of the houses are free and clear. Some of them are in need of repair, but there is no justification for the conventional picture of vast numbers of aged people dragging out their last days in unheated rooms.

There is no question that to be old in America is not a mark of prestige. Part of the problem comes from the tendency to early retirement encouraged by Social Security. In a commercial republic, prestige and respect are very largely a function of work. Men, especially, face a terrible crisis upon retirement. They become feminized, help out with the housework, and become a nuisance to their wives. This is not an exclusively American phenomenon. Linda Evans Cool and Justine McCabe provide a cross-cultural comparison by reporting on the effect of old age in two Mediterranean societies in which the women grow in influence and the men seem to shrink. Much of the women's prestige has to do with their success as mothers and the strong ties they have established with their children. The men, on the other hand, spent their vital years exulting in their freedom. Like many an American father, they never got to know their children. In later years, without work or power, they are at loose ends.

In a highly mobile and industrialized society like the U.S., there are inevitable problems in growing old: retirement brings loss of prestige, children move away, the elderly retreat into false pride, independence, and most recently—resentment. Some do not escape the temptation to see themselves a victimized minority. At least, some of these difficulties are caused by government policies like Social Security—policies which, let us remember, were the bright ideas of the current generation of men and women over 65. Of course, there is no golden age to return to but it is time to release some of the pressures which work against intergenerational unity and affection. Grandparents have a natural stake in their children and grandchildren. In circumstances of affluence (even in the Depression, America was a comparably affluent society), families are free to express their natural affections—as so many do still in the U.S. Our only real problem with the elderly is that they are cut off from all the associations of family and friends which give meaning to anyone's life. The very least we can do, as Allan Carlson has suggested, is to restructure Social Security and the tax structure to alleviate *some* of the government discrimination against families. cc

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STAGE

What Became a Legend Most?

by David Kaufman

***Lillian*; Written by William Luce; Directed by Robert Whitehead.**

Poor Zoe. Poor William. Poor Lillian.

As if it were a conspiracy to compensate for what they deemed a distortion of the facts, the critics seized Zoe Caldwell's one-woman show *Lillian*, written by William Luce, as an occasion to say more about Lillian Hellman than to discuss the biodrama they were offered. The most prevalent criticism of Luce's script, in fact, is that he misrepresented Hellman by glossing over the more controversial aspects of her life and by whitewashing her notorious career as a playwright, a mendacious memoirist, a relentless Stalinist, and a vindictive, self-serving celebrity.

"While Mr. Luce's Lillian admits to flaws," bemoaned Frank Rich in his review for the *Times*, "her flaws are never as grave as those of her antagonists' and her anger is always in the cause of right." What Luce provides, Rich claims, is "a sanitized Hellman portrait that, like all bowdlerized official biographies, lacks the conflict and depth essential to create a dramatic or psychologically gripping character." John Simon resented that "there is nothing about what it was like to be married to a writer, Arthur Kober, and very little about living with another, Hammett, except for some oft-rehearsed incidents grown shopworn. Nothing about what it is like to be a writer oneself, or about how one evolved one's politics and just what they were. Nothing about Russia, very little about Broadway and Hollywood, and not much about literary and other friendships and enmities. A lot of this has to do with Hellman's own omissions. . . . The harshest bit of self-criticism is an understatement such as 'Alexander Woollcott once said I looked like the prowhead on a whaling ship.'"

But why should we expect Hellman to present herself in anything but a positive light in a "biodrama"? How could Luce have fulfilled such an expectation, yet remained true to the format?

The problem here may have as much to do with the form itself as with Lillian Hellman. In recent years, our stages have suddenly become cluttered with what many are calling the "monodrama" (though biodrama seems more germane). Regardless of its name, the genre goes back at least as far as 1959, when Hal Holbrook appeared on Broadway in *Mark Twain Tonight*. Subsequent years introduced Henry Fonda as Clarence Darrow; Emlyn Williams as Dylan Thomas; Julie Harris as Emily Dickinson (in William Luce's *The Belle of Amherst*); James Whitmore as Will Rogers; Pat Carroll as Gertrude Stein; and, of course, Roy Dotrice in *Brief Lives*.

If these successes are not enough, the past three seasons have seen, on or off Broadway: Donal Donnelly as George Bernard Shaw; Katharine Houghton as Louisa May Alcott; Alec McCowen as Kipling; Edward Herrmann as T.S. Eliot, and more recently as Siegfried Sassoon to Dylan Baker's Wilfred Owen; Kate Nelligan as Virginia Woolf; Andrew Robinson as Jack Henry Abbott; Jan Miner (who most theatergoers would recognize as Madge from TV commercials, and who incidentally popped up briefly in 1982 as Winifred Wagner) as Gertrude Stein to Marion Seldes as Alice B. Toklas.

And these are only the literary lives; at least an equivalent number of historical figures, musicians, painters (and even their models) have provided grist for the mill. I also want to emphasize that the above list represents only what I've seen. Not even the Shuberts or *Variety* could definitively account for what I've missed, although I know of at least two Zelda Fitzgeralds, one Rimbaud, and one Hemingway in only the past two years, and there's an O'Neill scheduled to arrive this spring.

The theater runs the risk of becoming a dramatized version of the *Norton Anthology of Literature*. What is worse, our drama has succumbed to the culture's obsession with celebrity and fame. The impulse to render the life of a writer on stage becomes particularly irresistible, it would seem. Since the biodramatist as a rule incorporates many of the writer's original words from all available sources, he relies on the notion that he is creating an inviolate or an *accurate* portrait; one which has been endorsed by the subject, as it were, in absentia.

Although we might prefer to construe some benefit from the current abundance of biodramas (in the way that Isak Dinesen, for example, acquired more readers since the film *Out of Africa* opened in the last few months than she did in the preceding 50 years), the trend to immortalize writers on stage seems more rooted at this point in celebrity for celebrity's sake, than in any ambition to enlarge the audience for the work. Interest in the personality, in the driving force behind the work, has eclipsed the achievement which made the person worthy of attention in the first place.

But in the case of Lillian Hellman, such a difference may be negligible. As with a number of her contemporaries —consider especially Capote and Mailer and even Tennessee Williams —the tack of fiction and the compass of nonfiction became more negotiable than ever before. These writers' lives became fictions even as they presented their fictions as if they were their lives. The more contemporary writers have been part of and party to the cultural craze with personality, as facilitated by technological and media developments which, as Neil Postman has articulated so well in *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, make all business into

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show business.

It seems curiously relevant that after "abandoning" her career as a playwright in the early 60's, Hellman resumed her writing career in the early 70's as a memoirist (*An Unfinished Woman*, *Pentimento*, *Scoundrel Time*, and *Maybe*, each of which figures in the Luce version). In his tribute to Hellman shortly after her death on June 30, 1984, even Robert Brustein, her friend and colleague, devoted precious little space to discussing her plays—roughly one and a half paragraphs out of 10. As he summarized it, "It may be that her life, with its strong alliances, combative courage, and abrupt domestic scenes, will eventually be considered her greatest theater." Brustein, of course, understood that it wasn't Hellman's work which needed to be defended, but her character, her reputation, and her very being. And he alone seemed to have the desire or the ability to assume the burden. Marsha Norman's article, "Lillian Hellman's Gift to a Young Playwright," for the *Sunday Times* was also a tribute, but it read like a child's essay on a great American; Hilton Kramer's epitaph, on the other hand, as it appeared in his own *The New Criterion*, seemed as interested in prolonging the controversy that had plagued Hellman in the last two decades of her life, as in resolving it.

Hellman insisted on the integrity of her "memoirs," even though their veracity had been questioned in and out of the courts. In any event, her prose was impeccable enough to surmount —or undermine—any debate that ensued. It was this quality that Luce ostensibly set out to capture. And to that end, he couldn't have had a more appropriate collaborator—Hellman herself: the fact that Hellman had reviewed Luce's script during its development already distinguishes *Lillian* from all other biodramas that have come before. It also should satisfy those critics who complained that Luce was too favorable in his presentation.

Luce had the wisdom to pose the moment of the meeting, or the session, in 1961, on the eve of Hammett's death. The setting is a hospital waiting room. Her beloved "Dash," we are made to understand, is sequestered in a room stage right, where he is dying. The loaded circumstance would put her in a reminiscent and sentimental mood, as well as a loquacious one, just as it makes the otherwise artificial context of biodrama more plausible in this case. She begins, "I think I've always known about my memory . . . " as she proceeds to recall her upbringing in New Orleans and New York, the influence of her family (both immediate and extended), on her development as a precocious child, certain anecdotes from her Hollywood days, the events surrounding her Broadway premiere of *The Children's Hour*, and her stormy relationship with Hammett. As both her detractors and her champions would agree, Hellman's most dramatic moment was her testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Her appearance there is relived in Act II with all due weight.

Three-time Tony Award winner Zoe Caldwell appears as Lillian Hellman in Lillian, *a one-woman show by William Luce. Photo by Joan Marcus.*

The challenge of *Lillian* has little to do with the recalled events, however, most of which would be familiar to anyone who has read Hellman's memoirs. Since Hellman herself had, on talk show after talk show, visited our living rooms, the real question was how could an imposter pull it off. Neither Luce nor Hellman could have hoped for a better accomplice than Zoe Caldwell.

Aside from the frighteningly effective makeup, Caldwell breathes heavier than usual, chain-smokes, and shakes her head for the palsied effect. She also delivers the most effective innuendo and facial expressions to persuade us when she is being sincere and to suggest when she is being coy. She never loses the character she has inhabited, or the figure who appears to have inhabited her. The applause which follows her reading of Hellman's letter to the HUAC could be for Caldwell as well as for Hellman —at that point, it's as if there's no difference.

At the end of Luce's scenario, Hammett dies, leaving a maudlin Lillian who lapses into profundity: "The past with its punishments, its rewards, its foolishness is there for each of us. . . . But the then and the now are one." Though the closing may seem too pat, Luce's subtext suggests what no one else has. Hellman never really survived Hammett's death, devoting the rest of her writing career not to plays and the creative output he evoked, but to exercising her memory, perhaps in hopes of retaining him that much more fully. Still, at best, it becomes a partial answer for a woman whose life was a riddle till the end. Her milestone remark in 1952, "I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions," was ludicrously superseded by the most prominent image of her 20 years later in an ad for Blackglama furs, boldly asking, "What becomes a Legend most?"

The controversy surrounding Lillian Hellman continued until her death. Perhaps the greatest testimony to the success of *Lillian* is that the reception of the show reflected perfectly the response that Hellman herself received. It aroused the imbroglio no less than the woman. Once again, a Hellman work was overshadowed by the controversy her life provoked. cc

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Old Changelings and New Mutants

by Raymond J. Pentzell

To focus some thoughts on current trends in American theatrical style —as distinct from play writing—it may help to use a telescoping lens to

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zero in on a classic play, not itself American. The play I have in mind is one that was recently produced not in the bazaars of New York but in one of our more influential "regional" companies, the entire production directed and designed by established hands at drumbeating for the New. When I learned that Robert Brustein was opening a run at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge of Middleton and Rowley's 1622 tragedy *The Changeling*, directed by himself and designed by Michael Yeargan, and that (Amtrak *volente*) I would be able to get to it, I made plans. After all, I know the play well: I directed it in 1973 and published a long piece of scholarly criticism on it two years later. What is more, my attraction to mounting the play in the first place was in part stimulated by the wretchedness of Elia Kazan's stab at it in 1964, at the then-nascent Lincoln Center Rep, and thus by my overall concurrence with Brustein's ruthless review in *The New Republic*. So *The Changeling* is an old friend.

I have never met Brustein, but I have loosely followed (and sometimes cheered on) his self-advertised career ever since I joined in the student agitation that ended up bringing him as dean to the Yale School of Drama in 1966, the year I took my degree and left. In none of my subsequent visits to his theaters at Yale or Harvard, however, have I managed to see a production directed by him. The recent production of *The Changeling* gave me a chance to view his efforts through a telescopic lens.

The first thing A.R.T.'s *Changeling* did was to fog it over with plain mediocrity. The acting (except for competent performances in a couple of secondary roles) did not even merit that most tepid of put-downs, "adequate." And the inadequacy was manifestly not the whole—or even chief—fault of the earnest, hardworking actors. Rather, it seeped outward from a wetly limp handling by Brustein himself of character development, language, and blocking. I knew something was wrong at the very first group-entrance, when I heard the unmistakable guffaws and hoots of Michael Benthall's "whooping gentlemen" of the 1950's-style Old Vic: that noisy, vacuous jollity by which ill-defined characters are got on and off stage by directors at a loss to suggest *why* they are coming and going. Something was awry indeed.

For in the script we have a remarkable play in which "change"—moral, psychological, and tonal—is a key motif. Brustein himself makes much of this in his program note. At the play's center is a sort of spoiled ingenue, Beatrice Joanna, in whose mouth butter would keep as unctuously icy as her self-centered concern for her own "honor," and as hard as the insults she pipes at her father's ugly sycophant, De Flores. Dismissing the man betrothed to her because she has fallen in love with a handsome newcomer, Beatrice elevates her romantic whim to an imperative. She cajoles the convenient De Flores (when she at last stops abusing him for his unpleasant looks) into murdering the inconvenient fiancé. De Flores, writhing in lust and resentment, does so. He then demands her maidenhead as payment. Horrified, the Beauty gives in to the Beast's blackmail, so as to preserve her worshiped reputation as well as her new betrothal.

Middleton's brilliant twist is to have Beatrice grow really to love De Flores: After the two have contrived to hoodwink the virginity-obsessed new husband and murder an untrustworthy lady-in-waiting, Beatrice tells De Flores, "I'm forced to love thee now, 'Cause thou provid'st so carefully for my honor." Tainted love does not redeem the Beast but depraves the flawed Beauty. Once discovered, the pair die in a messy murder-suicide that merely disgusts Beatrice's honor-bound father and her betrayed husband.

But in the A.R.T. production we have a Beatrice whose downward trajectory is nearly all a matter of "emblematic" costume changes (white, to white-with-a-red-panel-between-the-legs, to black and décolleté). From her first entrance she is informal, brassy, at times even vulgar, played by a young actress who—with sufficient improvement in stage skill—could develop the style of Ann Bancroft. Brustein apparently did nothing to help her communicate the wellborn, pampered, proper, and irresponsibly willful Beatrice that the play demands at its outset. Far worse is the A.R.T. treatment of De Flores, by an accomplished farce-actor. He reveals no "character" at all—no humiliation under Beatrice's contempt, no self-loathing to wrestle with his vindictive lustfulness, nothing but a suite of Minsky one-liners (read as if by a David Burns trying to play Jim in *Taxi*) and sleek, Nosferatu-like posturings. (The Nosferatu image must have been recognized in rehearsal. At one point, Beatrice tries to ward him off with the cross hung round her neck. He tears it from her and stamps on it. But in the next scene, she has it back on, undamaged, so what is the point?)

In my program I jotted a note to the effect that Brustein seems to have blocked the play solely to get a half-dozen good still photographs for lobby display. Then I walked out to the lobby during intermission to find that the tableau that had prompted my note was in fact the poster photo. There *were* a good half-dozen striking tableaux in the show, as well as some classy entrances by De Flores. In between them, desultory wandering and gestural cliché. There was no more sense of the meaningful choreography often implicit in Middleton and Rowley's scene construction than of the meanings often conveyed by the dialogue's metrical rhythms. Brustein's long-held conviction that American actors need an "American" style with English classical drama evidently extends to distrusting the English dramatists to know how iambic verse can delimit, and hence direct, the actor's palette of possible emphases.

I do not mean to quibble. I do mean to try to beat my way through the fog of the production's ineptitude to clarify what I think is behind its offhand amateurishness. For, even having multiplied instances great and small of Brustein's indifference to communicating character, nuance of meaning, and moral "change," we must ask what *did* command his interest? I think the answer is locatable in the set, in one of the pantomimic sequences, and in the presence onstage of a pair of young female supernumeraries. The former was a fine job of work, up to a point; the latter two revealed a derangement indicative of everything that critics seem to mean by "postmodern."

Yeargan's set was inspired by an

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M.C. Escher engraving: a shadow box of elusive geometry and inverted staircases, serving the play's motif of smooth yet nightmarish "concealment." But Yeargan translated his theme into stainless steel and backlighted glass, in the same chic blend of art deco, *japonaiserie*, and store-window display that has marked his work for a decade. Upstage center loomed a large, blood-red moon that waxed and waned through the course of the play. A decorative nightscape of stars and a whirling-mirror effect for two ghostly appearances each contributed its due pizazz. In sum, the play's Spanish castle was a chill hybrid of the technicolor "novel" scenes inset in Paul Schrader's *Mishima* film and a space station belonging to Darth Vader.

On set, the characters (leather-clad, reptilian) seemed as decorative and impermeable as its stainless steel posts and beams. They were neither "Spanish" nor "Jacobean," of course. When Brustein tackled the pantomime wedding of Beatrice and her new husband, we were treated to some slow-motion *diablerie*: a roomful of ghostwalkers, hands upturned like rabbinical King Tuts, underwent an inexplicable rite conducted by a black-hooded *penitente*. My point is not merely the rite's strangeness. In "inventing" a creepy marriage ceremony out of a jumble of unrelated iconic gestures, the director utterly quashed the true irony of the scene: the familiar, festive, seemingly optimistic wedding of a girl already poisoned by murder and betrayal. If there is no recognizable sacrament, there can be no blasphemy. But Brustein has had a soft spot for counterfeit "black Masses" ever since his 1975 *Don Juan*.

This *Changeling* is not located in a recognizable European culture at all, not even in a rigid, patriarchal, vindictive one. It is a collage of free-floating "ideas" about Male Dominance; ideas, moreover, held by artists who seem not even to be in genuine sympathy with the woman in the case. Yet it is not intellectually coherent enough to be allegory, and neither impassioned nor "political" enough to aim at the mark set by nightmare-fancying German Expressionists. It is a store-window display, for a boutique of cultural alienations.

Vermandero, the castle's lord and Beatrice's father, goes everywhere accompanied by two young ladies dressed in white. Since we learn early in the play that Beatrice is his only daughter, these two ubiquitous teenagers remain a source of mystery: Who on earth *are* they? Then, late in the play during a predawn fire alarm, we learn: they are Vermandero's bed companions, both of them. Beatrice's father, the iron-willed overseer of his daughter's reputation, comes equipped, publicly, with a brace of Lolitas. Never mind plausibility in even the most corrupt of Mediterranean Christian cultures: Male Authority Figures Are Slavers of Women—and, *ipso facto*, lecherous old crocks into the bargain.

And so the weirdly scholarly and naive Alsemero, Beatrice's straitlaced husband, turns into a vulgar wife-beater as soon as he learns of her dereliction. He mops the floor up with her, in a Punch-and-Judy show that serves to deflect totally the horrific, unhinging shock he has undergone.

Tomaso, the vengeful brother of the murdered fiancé, adds to the scripted horrors of the final murder-suicide an unscripted burst of violence: he castrates the dead De Flores. (Why? De Flores only killed his brother; he did not rape him.) Actually, Tomaso saws off De Flores's stuffed codpiece, a turn of *Grand Guignol* that would be silly if it were not repellent, or repellent if it were not silly.

And so Brustein, who has lucidly written of *The Changeling*'s "profound psychology," eschews both psychology and profundity in a production that is strikingly decorative, occasionally startling, opaquely superficial, and deathly cold. Brustein also has written of the play's "cloudy ethical construct." Had he really entered into its moral world (approve of that world or no), he would have found nothing cloudy but his own "postmodern" reflexes. It is not the clumsy acting that finally puts one off; nor is it even the production's sleekness. It is the radical alienation of the company from Middleton's ethical *milieu*—which is to say, the *milieu* (for all the extreme and unbalanced elements that Middleton chose to examine) of historic civilization, including its presumptive values of marital chastity, honesty, and parental authority.

Twenty-one years ago in a *Partisan Review* article, Leslie Fiedler pinned the label "the new mutants" on a coming generation whose deracination seemed to him to be total. The mutants are now holding the theatrical mirror up to our society of yuppies, sadofeminists, and "respectable" coke-snorters, and the images they reveal, even in productions of classics, combine into a theater of what critic Elinor Fuchs has celebrated as "postness." "We are post-industrial," she crooned in an article of a couple of years ago, "post-capitalist, post-humanist, post-apocalyptic, even post-cognitive."

We might prefer the old changelings, who were merely madmen. cc

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SCREEN

Dancing a Narrow (Party) Line

by E. Christian Kopff

***White Nights*; Produced and directed by Taylor Hackford; From a story by James Goldman; United Artists.**

The tradition of the American musical film is a grand one, reaching back as it does to the great days of Busby Berkeley, of Astaire and Rogers, of Dick Powell and ZaSu Pitts. It suffers from one defect, inherent in its genre: how to find a plausible or at least not risible plot to tie together the songs and dances. In recent years, as audience tastes have grown less sophisticated—less capable of comprehending generic differences and more demanding of simple realism—the musical has fallen on hard times. Clint Eastwood and Robert Duvall will play a country singer or a fan who frequents country music bars. Barbra Streisand sang her songs as voice-overs to her characters' thinking, much as Laurence Olivier did the soliloquies in his *Hamlet*.

In *White Nights* Taylor Hackford has returned to the older tradition of musicals, the tradition of fitting the musical numbers into plans for a new show. The context of the show is rather different from the motif we have

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grown to know and love from the days of *Babes on Broadway* or *Forty-Second Street*. Mikhail Baryshnikov is a great Russian ballet dancer who defected to the West's freedom and wealth; Gregory Hines is a Black American tap dancer who deserted to Russia from our army in Vietnam. Baryshnikov's flight from London to Tokyo crash-lands in Russia. (The plane crash, incidentally, is very well directed. No one who sees what happens to Baryshnikov will ever disobey a stewardess asking us to remain seated until the plane reaches the gate.) KGB agents persuade Hines to lure Baryshnikov into opening the season at the Leningrad theater where his career began. So the two opposites have to live together and work together, their hostility turning into a grudging admiration. At the end, Hines and his Russian wife attempt to escape with Baryshnikov when they learn that she is pregnant: they want their baby to grow up in freedom.

The dancing is very good, set to music ranging from classical to Gershwin to rock. We see Baryshnikov and Hines spotlighted on their own and dancing together. We glimpse vividly important aspects of contemporary Russia: its extremes of wealth and poverty, the oppressive hand of bureaucracy and the secret police, the compromises the artist must make. The plot is a clever variation on tradition, with the opportunity for an exciting climax. Like Hackford's surprise hit of a summer ago, *An Officer and a Gentleman*, there is something in the movie for all ages from teenagers on up and for both sexes. Unlike *Officer*, the cursing is kept to the minimum needed to obtain a PG rating. It is hard to imagine anyone not having a good time at *White Nights*.

We do not need imagination, however. American reviewers have responded with a hostility which is hard for most viewers to understand. "Rambo-esque," one reviewer called it. "The Cold War is alive and well in *White Nights*," another grumbled. Considering that the most violent scene in the movie is the plane crash and that the American ambassador and his staff are shown as pusillanimous bureaucrats, more interested in avoiding publicity than anything else, it is hard to see what evokes such rage. The movie goes to great lengths to be "even-handed." The wealth open to a successful defector is mentioned, as is the suffering, personal and professional, of their families and loved ones. Hines explains in a sensational improvisatory tap dance why a young Black performer might want to defect from America at the time of the Vietnam War.

The movie does present the Secret Police's interests in manipulating performers for the good of the state, and it shows that even under adverse conditions most people opt for freedom over dictatorship. Surely neither of these observations is controversial. We have a police force—albeit not a very effective one—to try to keep people out of America; Russia has an army—and a rather effective one—to keep people in, not to mention the Berlin Wall and a few other inventions. The Soviets didn't let even a single stray sailor get away, and they spent years in court trying to get a teenage boy back, with the help of the American Civil Liberties Union's selective commitment to parental rights.

"Now I don't mind their taking sides and standing up for things that they believe in," like Merle Haggard. The moviegoer rather wishes, however, that the reviewers of *White Nights* would show a little more discretion. Surely a clever but innocuous variation on a traditional Hollywood genre is better treated with a grin or a yawn. Instead, it makes them angry. Why? We can all understand why the Soviet government does not like *White Nights*. Now I am not asserting that the film reviewers of America are Communists. I just wonder, with Mr. Sobran, what they would do differently if they were. cc

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ART

Jeweler to Royalty

by Shehbaz H. Safrani

A million dollars for an egg? But of course, not all eggs come from chickens. Malcolm Forbes recently paid $1 million for an "egg" by Fabergé at a sale of Russian art at Sotheby's in New York City. The cliché has it that diamonds are a girl's best friend, but why then are the jewels attractive to men?

It was Czar Nicholas, the last Romanov, who set the standard for quality jewels among the elite and the aristocracy, a standard aspired to by members of the House of Windsor, as well as by Americans like Mr. Forbes. Easter eggs, a holiday excitement for children today, acquired a rare status in Imperial Russia. Created and crafted by Fabergé, an astute jewelry designer, Russian Easter eggs deserve to be seen. If it is at all possible, the connoisseur must touch these works as well, to recognize the feel of an art object that is exquisite to both the eyes and the hands. Mr. Forbes currently holds 11 of the Imperial Russian Easter eggs; the Kremlin has only 10. Encouraged by his success in acquiring these treasures, Mr. Forbes reportedly whispered after his latest acquisition, "Eggs come by the dozen."

Not too long ago, A. Kenneth Snowman curated an exhibition of Fabergé creations entitled "From the Collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Other British Lenders." Most of the works on display were those of royalty, including the Queen Mother, Queen Elizabeth, and the Prince of Wales, Prince Charles. Mr. Snowman has also prepared an illustrated catalog, *Fabergé: Jeweler to Royalty*, highlighting the Windsor collection. Although there are many books on Fabergé, and some of his work is on display in a few leading museums, the Windsors cherish their private art collections rather zealously. As such, the Snowman exhibition and catalog shed more light on the collecting instincts of the Windsors. In fact, the British Royal Collection of Fabergé went on view for the first time in the United States. This exhibition was shown at New York's Cooper-Hewitt Museum. During the American Bicentennial, the Cooper-Hewitt became the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design.

The Snowman catalog surveys some of the finest of the over 200 rare and unusual works from the Fabergé workshops that were on loan from the Royal Collection. Included in the Windsor loan were selected works

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from other distinguished British collections, such as those of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, the Duchess of Westminster, and other lenders. The works of art in this catalog reveal the imaginative genius of Fabergé and the unmatched skills of the hardstone carvers, enamelers, and goldsmiths who fashioned these intricate, invariably delightful objects, admired and collected throughout the world.

The catalog illustrations reveal delicately carved animals; flower studies in gold, enamel, and rock crystal; tabletop accessories ranging from letter openers to miniature picture frames and several of the famous eggs originally exchanged among members of the Russian royal family at Easter. Mr. Snowman also includes an extensive group of miniature animals that form part of the Queen's Collection at Sandringham—animated and lifelike portraits of favorite dogs (including Queen Alexandra's pet Pekingese) and horses, seals, kangaroos, ducks, cats, and frogs. ∞

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CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From the Southwest

by Odie B. Faulk

Unto the Least of These . . .

A few years ago Oral Roberts made national headlines when he confessed to having seen a 900-foot-tall Jesus in the heavens urging the faithful to donate to the "City of Faith," as he called the medical school he was building at his university. Those who believed him, his "partners," were asked to send monthly donations to complete the building of a high-rise, several-hundred-bed teaching hospital at the Tulsa campus of this electronic evangelist. A sufficient number of partners volunteered their checks to open this hospital in connection with Oral Roberts University's School of Medicine.

Now the Reverend Roberts is back in the news, and again he is asking for partners. He says he needs hundreds of thousands of the faithful to donate 10 dollars or more each month for the next 12 months to save the City of Faith from having to close. The hospital has proven a financial drain of major proportions. In an attempt to cut expenses at his university—and possibly to save it from bankruptcy—the Reverend Roberts last year closed ORU's College of Dentistry, and he has just announced that he is giving the ORU College of Law, with its 10-million-dollar library, to the Christian Broadcast Network University in Virginia.

Yet the medical school at Oral Roberts University has more than financial problems. It also is facing a loss of accreditation because it has an average daily bed occupancy of only about 250, which gives it fewer patients than the American Medical Association's accreditation division feels are needed for the proper training of the number of medical students attending the institution. In an attempt to get more patients to fill its beds—and thus meet the requirements of accreditation—the Reverend Roberts several months ago announced that the City of Faith would accept charity patients. Naturally this brings even greater financial pressure on the institution.

What has happened to the Reverend Roberts and his medical school, the City of Faith, brings to mind a story often told in classes on higher education administration. It seems that a university president died and—as any professor telling the story would say—naturally went to hell, where he was greeted by Satan himself. "We're glad you're here," said Lucifer. "We've been saving a position for you. We're going to make you president of the University of Hell."

The president was astonished. "But back on earth I was a university president," he said. "What's so hellish about this position?"

"I guess no one's told you yet," said Old Scratch with a fiendish grin. "Our university has two medical schools."

In many circles in America it is fashionable to chuckle when Oral Roberts reports to the media that he has had a vision of some kind or that he is in financial plight and needs partners. These same people find humor in what they see as the gullibility of that segment of the public which supports the endeavors of Oral Roberts. Many of these elitist chic think it ironic and amusing that a fundamentalist preacher, who began his ministry in a tent as a faith healer, would build and try to maintain a center for training medical doctors. Oral Roberts jokes, much in the vain of Aggie and/or Polish jokes, make the cocktail circuit and elicit knowing smiles of superiority.

Yet whatever the sins of the electronic ministry of Oral Roberts and the self-aggrandizement that drives him to name his university for himself, he is performing one of the fundamental tasks assigned by the founder of the Christian religion: ministering to the needs of the indigent ill. These people, unable to show proof of insurance or ability to pay cash, would not be admitted to most public or private hospitals in America. In fact, in many hospitals, both privately owned and religious, indigent patients routinely are referred to one or another of the welfare agencies maintained by the

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state or Federal government where they supposedly can get help.

Recently I had a conversation with a minister of the gospel who asked me if I tithed. I responded that I did, but that I did not give it to the church. Rather, said I, my tithe went to the Federal government.

"But the tithe, by definition, belongs to God!" said the minister in shocked tones. "You can't give your tithe to anyone else."

My rebuttal was that the purpose of giving, as I recall my reading of the Bible, was to aid the sick, the poor, and the needy, not to build imposing structures furnished with gold, stained glass, and mahogany, much less to buy silk suits, luxury automobiles, and trips to the Holy Lands. Today those looking for true irony will find it in reflecting that in this nation of some 150 million professing Christians, the transient, the sick, the poverty stricken do not find help in most churches. On occasion they will be given a meal or a small amount of money at the temple door, but most often they are turned away with a suggestion that they go to the nearest public welfare agency, just as indigent patients at most religious hospitals would die in the lobby before being admitted for free care.

In this age of the New Deal/Great Society, the government has become the vehicle for providing aid to dependent children, food for the hungry, housing for those of low income, medical care for the ill and the aged, and subsistence income for those in their retirement years. More than half the budget of the Federal government now is earmarked for humanitarian, philanthropic, and eelemosynary purposes.

Therefore, as I told the minister with whom I was discussing the subject of tithing, if my tax bracket is more than two-tenths of my total income, then I am giving a tithe and more of my worldly goods for the welfare of my fellow man as demanded by the founder of the Christian religion. Unfortunately, not all that 10 percent filters down to the poor, for government bureaucrats eat up too large a portion of it as they gorge themselves at the public trough.

Meanwhile, too many of our Christian denominations are using the income they receive from their collections to help finance the World Council of Churches and its revolutionary ideology of redistributing the wealth around the globe.

Ministers like the one chiding me about my failure to tithe to the church, who feel that too many of their parishioners are in the same boat that I occupy, might find a greater willingness to donate when the plate is passed if they returned to the basic Christian principle of taking care of the lame, the halt, the blind, and the hungry at the church door—as the Reverend Roberts is doing at his City of Faith. If such were the case, then there would be no need for Federal and state governments to be in the business of welfare.

Indeed, if our American religious communities rededicated themselves to the principles of Christian charity, then we might have, as the justices of the Supreme Court are demanding, a true separation of church and state. cc

Odie B. Faulk is a distinguished Southwestern historian and contributing editor.

Letter From Minneapolis

by Herbert Schlossberg

The Captain and His Cause

Our town was recently graced by a visit and lecture from one of the nation's foremost philosophers. Captain Kangaroo came to this outpost on the Tundra, only a hundred miles or so southeast of Lake Wobegon, to speak at the Town Hall Forum series put on by the local ecclesiastical emporium. We knew in advance that Big Thoughts were in the offing.

Appearing as his alter ego, Bob Keeshan, the Captain was disturbed that the successive cohorts of the viewers he had nurtured—his *Yupparoos*, as he calls them—beginning some 30 years ago, were not turning out as he wished. Exercised about the large numbers of his old friends of the airwaves who are poor or in jail, he called for a renewed effort to make the world a better place, so that the Yupparoos might come to a better end.

Now, that may sound simplistic to some readers, but simplism died with Mr. Keeshan's earlier incarnation as Clarabelle the Clown on the *Howdy Doody* show. Keeshan now quotes approvingly the famous statement of the Bard of Baltimore, H.L. Mencken (whom nobody ever called simplistic): "For every complex question, there is a simple answer. And it's wrong."

This may seem to be just another shot taken by Mencken at the *booboisie*, and bought naively by the Captain. But Captain Kangaroo wishes us to consider seriously the plight of the generations he has instructed. "Many of the people in prison today," he observes, "are children we started nurturing in the 1960's. Where did we go wrong?" He doesn't seem to have answered that question yet. But for those who want solutions to the problems the Captain has identified, he gives them straight from the shoulder: We have to put more money into day care; we have to improve television; and we have to teach a philosophy of stewardship. There you have it. Except for this little homily: "Kindness is the lubricant that makes it possible for us to share our world together." All of which brings to mind Goethe's observation that "things are simpler than they seem, and more difficult than can be imagined."

It may be impertinent for a mere former sergeant to say too much about the Captain's stirring message, but maybe he won't mind. The chief advantage of the call to complexity, as Mencken must have known, is the prestidigitation by which it transforms moral categories into material ones. Why are people in jail? Only the simplistic think it has something to do with an ethical issue, when it's clearly a social one. Something in the physical environment causes people to behave in antisocial ways, and the only way to do something about it is to change the society. The Captain's young Yupparoo friends who are in jail now would not have to endure such suffering if we had had better day care for them back then. (Let's not say anything about having had better television).

The Captain, having been forced to walk the plank by the mercenary pirates of commercial television, is now campaigning for a new slot on public television. There is an inner consis-

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tency here. "You can accuse me of being a bleeding heart," the local newspaper quotes Keeshan as saying, "but . . . we should be raising our children to be good taxpayers." It's that simple. cc

Herbert Schlossberg, an investment advisor in Minneapolis, is the author of Idols for Destruction: Christian Faith and Its Confrontation With American Society *(Thomas Nelson Publishers).*

Letter From the Heartland

by Jane Greer

Some of us come later in life than others to . . . well, to adulthood. I was nearly in my 30's before I had even an inkling of the realities of civic responsibility or how to be a friend or why I should fasten my seat belt or how to keep my temper. I grew to wish I'd paid more attention in history and French classes and been more pliable during my decade of piano lessons. (My mother is avenged; she *told* me I'd be sorry.) And I finally began to understand some things about that deepest root of all conservative flowerings: marriage.

Now, I've seen good marriages and bad—more bad than good, in my estimation, but then I've always been unreasonable. I had a bad one myself and lived to laugh about it. All my life, it seems, I'd watched various people bully or nag each other, cheat or try to, chafe and fret and complain until I'd nearly decided on a monastic vocation. Yet many of these same people have been married—and to each other—for longer than I've been alive. There had to be something to it, or why would so many attempt it repeatedly? Until my enlightenment, marriage was, to me, an empty social ceremony, functionless; private commitment was what really mattered, and tenderness, and I'd seen too little of either.

But something hit me during the chore of copy-editing 1,500 pages of nearly illegible (and nearly illiterate) family histories for a miniscule North Dakota town's centennial book. Many of the writers—children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of pioneers—merely listed names and dates and places which melded behind my eyes after the first plodding hour of editing. A few enthusiastic souls (had no one ever *asked* them before?) set down accounts of adventures they'd lived through or been told about early pioneering days on this wild edge of the North Dakota Badlands. But even these tales, although they differed from each other in content, were identical in style, brimming with the same phrases and perceptions regardless of the writer's nationality.

Strangely, for me, I found this sameness beautiful: a clue, perhaps, that I'd grown up enough to appreciate the similarity in which lies community. The little town I read about was not made up of half a thousand eccentrics but of the whole cloth—a strong, rough homespun—of Englishmen and Norwegians and Hungarians and Germans-from-Russia and Scots, Catholics and Lutherans and Congregationalists living pretty much identical lives and agreeing pretty much about what mattered. And for no reason that I can think of except the grace of God, I was struck with epiphany each time I read the words "life's mate."

"Lars worked at the elevator for six months until he learned English; then he persisted until he found a life's mate, Lina, our grandmother, and they purchased the south half of the north half of Section 86, where our son still farms." "Magdalena and her life's mate, Frank, brought into this world 17 children (four of whom died in infancy), from which there are now 111 grandchildren and 326 great-grandchildren." *Life's mate.* The phrase sounds trite now, laughable, nearly anachronistic—but these writers mean it literally. Back then—back only a little ways, so close that we can almost remember it ourselves—people *did* marry "for life": that is, in order to be able to live.

Few bachelors or spinsters prospered, and when they grew ill or old, all they could hope for was the charity of neighbors. A man *needed* a wife: to keep house while he worked the fields; to help with the farm, if it were to be profitable enough to support them; to keep him from promiscuity. A woman *needed* a man to coax the uncompromising clay on land they both would die for. And they each needed children to help them work. It wasn't child abuse; it was *family*. Hard work was not only our harsh sentence in this vale of tears but our nourishment and joy. And marriage was a matter of life and death.

These little accounts I was forced to read happened neither long ago nor far away, yet they seem to belong to some brave lost time. For brides and grooms, a wedding is always necessarily full of private excitement and forgivably selfish pleasure; that is human nature and has a purpose. But the rings of weddings used to travel outward, widening into the community where the wedding became important in a much more concrete way. Today's weddings, large and small, are almost purely theatrical, for show; the bride and groom ask neither for the blessing of the community nor for its support. Guests come merely to wish the couple well (for perhaps the second or third time), not to promise their help

Former U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick analyzes the "Kennedy-Khrushchev Pact", the 1962 agreement that guaranteed the security of Fidel Castro's regime, and asks what the implications of a similar accord between Washington and Managua would be for the Western hemisphere. In English and Spanish. $3.00.

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Rainbow or Thunderstorm?

Readers of American newspapers could easily conclude that racial and ethnic conflicts are peculiar to South Africa and the United States, with an occasional flare-up in London or India. The truth is that governments everywhere find it difficult to superimpose the modern idea of nationhood upon the ancient realities of race and tribe. As Donald L. Horowitz points out in *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (University of California Press; Berkeley; $25.00), "Ethnicity is at the center of politics in country after country, a potent source of challenges to the cohesion of states and of international tension." Horowitz's book provides a valuable and long-overdue cross-cultural analysis of ethnic conflict, focusing especially on its manifestations in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean.

Because of "the ideological heritage of the post-Enlightenment West," both liberal democrats and orthodox Marxists expected ethnic consciousness to wane in the post-colonial world. But whether the country is Malaysia or Sri Lanka, Tanzania or Guyana, Horowitz finds the persistence of ethnic cleavages that cut deeper than those of economic class, territorial proximity, or even religion. In many Third World states, ethnic groups that banded together to oust the European colonists wasted little time turning against one another. The results do not encourage much confidence in Jesse Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition." Ethnic clashes have virtually killed democracy in most of Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, and communist revolutionaries now resort to "the labeling of entire ethnic groups as progressive or reactionary." As a professor of law and political science at Duke University, Horowitz understands only too well that books like his receive "only the reluctant attention reserved for distasteful subjects." But this study, the fruit of 20 years of research, deserves serious discussion as a probing analysis of a fundamental human reality. To ignore this reality is to risk what Reinhold Niebuhr called (in reference to fascism) "the revenge of a neglected idea."

Longer exposure to the philosophies of individualism, nationalism, capitalism, and Marxism have weakened the political importance of ethnic identity in Western Europe and North America. Yet Horowitz rightly insists that "even in the West, ethnicity continues to be an organizing principle, supplementing the weak bonds of egalitarian individualism." Indeed, as native birthrates plummet and African, Indian, and Turkish "guest workers" multiply, even the land of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" is rediscovering the strength of ethnic passions.

Meanwhile, power brokers in the U.S. play minority politics, as the New Immigration of Hispanics and Asians drive up the stakes of the game. *Hispanics in the United States: A New Social Agenda* (Transaction; New Brunswick, NJ; $12.95), edited by Pastora San Juan Cafferty and William C. McCready, clarifies some of the issues, especially the fight over bilingual education and the changing political role of the Catholic Church in the Southwest. Unfortunately, too often the contributors are content with citing a few statistical trends, quoting Marxian clichés about the primacy of economics, or advocating more voter registration drives. More illuminating than this superficial fascination with the political, demographic, and economic status of Hispanics is the all-too-brief discussion of "the dominant values of Mexican-American culture." These Hispanic values, we are told, define a "set of rules and justifications . . . antithetical to dominant White middle-class culture." Instead of wondering how to get more Hispanics into the voting booth, we might need to start asking what place voting and parliamentary practice would hold in a Hispanic United States. For as Horowitz shows, deeply divided societies hold elections rarely, and then only as a type of ethnic census.

Our own Federal government already keeps an ethnic census, though we are assured that the purpose is that of ending discrimination. Armed with their statistical evidence, Federal officials are even willing to use coercive integration and preferential treatment of minorities so as to create the desired social homogeneity. In *Education: Assumptions Versus History* (Hoover Institution Press; Stanford; $8.95), the Black economist Thomas Sowell exposes the fraudulent reasoning and the dubious results of forced busing and "affirmative action" programs in the schools. He shows that Black students were doing quite well at some segregated schools (including one within walking distance of the Supreme Court) and that the current use of double standards favoring Black students and teachers merely reinforces racism while cheating capable Blacks out of proper recognition.

Even more persuasive on the issue than Sowell's analysis is Horowitz's survey of preferential ethnic policies in other countries. In Telanganas, Malaysia, Tanzania, and elsewhere, Horowitz finds that preferential ethnic policies have consistently eroded standards of performance as they "have aroused more ethnic conflict than they assuaged, particularly because proposals for preferences often emanate from politicians not as a response to popular demands, but as a means of mobilizing political support." Globally, it appears that affirmative action is an equal-opportunity disaster. Although government officials everywhere insist that their ethnic preferences are only a temporary expedient, "preferences once adopted are difficult to reverse, even when . . . policymakers become convinced that reversal is warranted." To all appearances, ethnic conflict will be here for a long time—and so will affirmative action. cc

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or testify to the union's larger significance. Just yesterday, though, weddings were community praisefests (as well as deeply religious ceremonies), public evidence that there would be a future. Marriage was a promise to the community, as the community was a promise to the nation. A young wife's privacy, and probably her civil rights, were routinely violated as her community suffered over her childlessness or congratulated itself upon her fecundity. Children, lots of children, meant growth. Life was exuberant and unplannable, families noisy, and townfolk demanding and forgiving but *never* complacent about right and wrong.

And not since we became too sophisticated for all that has our nation prospered so vigorously.

Now I am married to a man whose mother and I both agree is close to being perfect (except when he's driving in heavy traffic). We find ourselves in the odd position of trying to make ourselves an island—to separate ourselves from the river of nonchalance moving past us—so that we can gather around us a community. It may be merely a community of like-minded people—but what else *is* community? Our marriage is itself a *thing*, has an existence and a right to thrive and fulfill its promises in spite of our sometimes neglect. And although our glands and brains may scream at us to grab for the gusto, our hearts know that all we really need, all the world really needs, is for us to be happy at home. cc

Jane Greer edits Plains Poetry Journal *and is not working on a novel.*

Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

Potomac Fever

In November, *National Review* carried an appreciative piece on the very appreciable William J. Bennett, Secretary of Education. *NR*'s Washington inside-dopester, John McLaughlin, concluded that "with a bit of grooming, up-front experience, and continued exposure to Potomac fever [Bennett] may have the making of a politician." "There are," he added, "worse corruptions."

Oh? Name one.

My acquaintance with corruptions, such as it is, teaches me that many are essentially self-destructive ("victimless," in the current jargon) and that most of the rest involve abusing others one at a time, or in small groups at most. The characteristic corruption of politicians is that they enjoy, or come to enjoy, pushing people around —and politicians, these days, push people around in very large numbers indeed. Our suspicious Founders were on the right track when they tried to bind the power-hungry with the chains of the Constitution. Too bad they've slipped those chains.

The problem—and it's one I gather the Reagan Administration faced in its early days—is that, while big-government ideologues take to politics like ducks to water, most principled anti-Federalists have things they'd rather do than go to Washington and push people around. They have products to manufacture, fields to harvest,

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books to write, sick people to heal —and if they don't have something better to do, they'll *find* something. They tend to think that politics are not important (mistaking ideal for fact), or at least not worthy. In any case, few have enough sense of duty to overcome their distaste for Washingtonians, or the instincts to flourish among them if they do. What this means is that a conservative administration has to fill many of its positions either with the incompetent, who need the work, or with slimy politicos of the sort that run college student governments.

But the saddest spectacle of all is that of good people going to Washington and succumbing to Potomac fever. John McLaughlin is a case in point: no column of his would be complete without at least one lip-smacking reference to "insiders"—pals of his who have told him something or other. The man clearly enjoys his job more than he should. Similarly, there are several folks I knew some years back as wholesome, antistatist lads and lasses who went to D.C. as members of the Reagan team. They now live and breathe politics, read the *Washington Post* unapologetically, and speak in reverential tones of "the President," "the Secretary," or "the Senator." That this feeds their own self-importance is sad, but relatively harmless. Far worse is that it feeds the self-importance of their bosses, who should be incessantly reminded that their jobs rest on something very like extortion.

Washington attracts unpleasant characters in the first place, and something in the atmosphere turns even apparently decent people into toadies, sycophants, *Post* readers. If *The American Spectator* can survive its move from Bloomington with its irreverence intact, it will be some kind of first. It has moved, after all, to a town that thinks Mark Russell is funny.

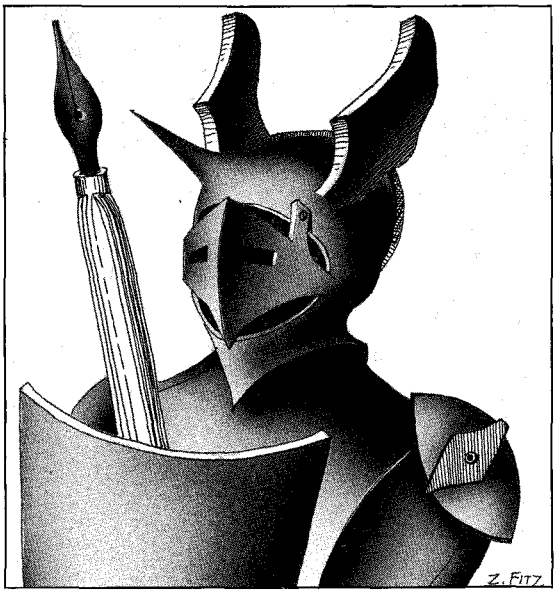
Real Americans don't like Washington. We'll go there, ride the subway, take in the museums. . . . What the hell—we've paid for it. But some of us feel unclean after we've been there a while. My wife and I were driving home once through Virginia, after a weekend spent with an assortment of policy analysts, Legal Services lawyers, consumer advocates, Congressional staffers, and the like. When a long line of Army vehicles passed us, headed north, my wife (God bless her) turned and yelled, "Go get 'em, boys!"

Well, anybody who's had anything to do with the military knows that's not the answer, but there's no denying that the old boil-lancing impulse surfaces whenever my nose gets rubbed in how America's substance is splashed around and taken for granted. (I guess it could be worse, though. Thank God, one of my more down-home friends says, that we don't get all the government we pay for.)

In my own line of work, I see a lot of colleges and universities, and I have concluded that you can generally tell how good a university is by the architectural prominence of its administration building. The relationship is inverse. At Oxford, for example, the administrative offices of the university are tucked away on a side street—very difficult to find without directions. Oxford is a great university. One of its officers told me once that he looks in the mirror every morning and says to himself: "I know I'm an evil, but am I a *necessary* evil?"

Bill Bennett may very well perform the same morning ritual. If so, I hope he keeps it up. We'd be better off if all of John McLaughlin's friends did it. Maybe Reagan—excuse me, the President—could suggest it in his next speech. But I can't imagine Tip O'Neill, Ted Kennedy, or Lowell Weicker going along. The sad thing is that too many one-time conservatives wouldn't buy it either. cc

John Shelton Reed is professor of sociology at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and a part-time mobile-home salesman.



TYPEFACES

Rights of Clergy

Any sensible kid in America wants to be a newsman when he grows up or, better still, when he doesn't. Politicians may have the power to make laws and budgets, but it's the journalists who make the politicians. Besides, even Presidents have to obey the laws. Journalists, on the other hand, are exempt—or so they tell us. In recent decades, editors and reporters have succeeded in transforming the First Amendment into a charter of aristocratic privilege. What had been intended as a simple prohibition against Federal infringements of free speech and the right to worship has become the rock under which pornographers and anchormen seek refuge whenever there is a chance to make a buck or improve the ratings. In recent memo-

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ry, the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and the major networks have defied established law, court orders, grand jury subpoenas, military secrecy, and elected officials. Perhaps most notorious was the 1981 Janet Cooke case, when *Washington Post* editors defiantly proclaimed that they would stand on their First Amendment rights in refusing to reveal the whereabouts of the eight-year-old heroin addict described in Cooke's feature article—until it was finally discovered that the "boy" was a figment of Cooke's well-paid imagination.

The public's right to know is apparently selective. It doesn't cover the *Post*, nor does it cover CBS, which requested the court to prevent General Westmoreland from publicizing any of the information the network was forced to turn over to him. Many journalists now believe that their constitutional status is so holy that they may employ subterfuge and deception. Witness the recent case reported in the *New York Times*: a newspaper writer posed as a morgue attendant in order to get an exclusive interview with the family of a murder victim. In a candid 1984 editorial entitled "First Amendment Junkies," *The New Republic* summed up the situation.

> In recent years, journalists have asserted a constitutional right not to testify in front of grand juries, not to submit to search warrants, not to give depositions in civil lawsuits, and not to have their notes and documents subpoenaed. . . . But by definition, such exemptions from the normal duties of citizenship cannot be granted to everyone.

The privileges claimed by journalists resemble the rights enjoyed by the clergy at the greatest extent of their power. For three centuries the kings of England had to wage an unremitting struggle against a large clerical class that claimed immunity from the royal law. In some cases, the flunky who swept out the church could claim the right of clergy to be tried in an ecclesiastical court, even for crimes like rape. In America, clergymen have never enjoyed a very privileged status (even draft exemption was granted by Con-

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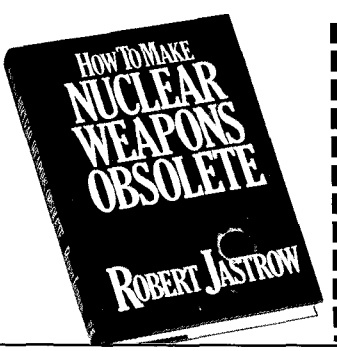

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gress only as a revocable privilege), and almost nothing remains of the old rights of sanctuary or the privilege of the confessional. But when a minister goes to jail for refusing to betray *his* sources, don't expect it to make the headlines: the Fourth Estate is jealous of its privileges.

The establishment of the Fourth Estate as priestly class might be acceptable—or at least bearable—if most Americans thought newsmen could be trusted and respected. But we have never especially esteemed journalists, and in recent years public regard for newsmen has reached all-time lows. A survey reported last year in *U.S. News & World Report* found that three out of four Americans regard the press as exploitive and that the country as a whole ranks journalists just above used-car salesmen in honesty. A 1984 *Newsweek* survey discovered that one-third of Americans feel strong confidence in the country's newspapers and only one-fourth in the television networks. (Even our chaotic public schools received a stronger vote of confidence.) At a seminar of media leaders sponsored last year by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Burton Benjamin of CBS observed that during his 30 years with the network he had never before seen such "intense unrelenting hostility toward television news. . . . [W]e are perceived as arrogant, as elitists, as self-appointed people setting a national agenda." Ellis Cose, director of the Institute for Journalism Education at Berkeley recently conceded: "Never has there been such widespread questioning of journalism and journalists."

This public hostility is not hard to explain. Many of us recall the gross distortions in media reporting on Vietnam (now well-documented in Peter Braestrup's *The Big Story*). Nothing since Vietnam has increased our confidence in media coverage of military operations: newspapers rush into print the compromising and illegal disclosures of disaffected Pentagon employees and renegade CIA agents; reporters vie with each other to see who can disclose the most sensitive details of classified space shuttle flights; Navy communications are disrupted for weeks because of a leak in *Newsweek*—even a special test last year in Central America of arrangements for media presence during military action was quickly sabotaged by leaks that could have proved fatal had the operation been the real thing. No wonder most Americans approved of President Reagan's decision to exclude the press from Grenada. (When Daniel Schorr complained to one Pentagon official about the media ban, the officer responded: "Listen, the next time we have an invasion, we'll put the reporters in the first wave. Just reporters, no soldiers.")

If the press behaved badly over Grenada, their conduct in the aftermath of the space shuttle disaster was revolting. Carrion crows like Sam Donaldson and the harpies on NPR did not waste a minute before condemning NASA and calling the entire manned flight program into question. We know why they don't like the space program—it contributes to national defense, stimulates technological innovation, and gives us something to be proud of. But there was something ghoulish in the "I told you so's" which started even while pieces of debris were still falling into the Atlantic.

But perhaps even more fundamental as an irritant in the public mind is the privileged status that journalists have arrogated to themselves. In trying to sort through the reasons for public disaffection with the media, *Newsweek* noted that "there is a strong public sense that [the media] sometimes see themselves as exempt from the normal responsibilities of citizenship." Four years ago, *The Christian Century* complained that some reporters have made "deception an accepted part of investigative reporting" while others frequently abuse the use of confidential sources. "The First Amendment," the *Century* argued, "should not mean that journalists are absolved from responsibility as citizens and as members of the community."

A few media leaders now belatedly acknowledge that their reckless aloofness from the American public must be remedied. Tom Johnson, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, conceded in 1983 that "many in our profession have been guilty of conflicts of interest, have been guilty of presenting outright fiction as fact, have been guilty of irresponsible and prejudicial reporting." Professor Cose of Berkeley says that "it is time for those of us in journalism to admit what many of our critics have long maintained. As a group, we are self-righteous, often inaccessible brats, considerably more exclusionary than we care to acknowledge." NBC's John Chancellor is now even willing to contemplate the unthinkable possibility that newsmen may have to—at least for a time—voluntarily drop their claims to First Amendment privilege and obey the law like everybody else.

Most journalists are not willing to admit the truth. They blame the public for demanding perfection. At last year's seminar at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, a journalism professor suggested that most popular resentment against the media is the result of "little things" like misleading headlines or tasteless photographs—errors he attributed to the small dailies and not the blameless "national networks and big metropolitan newspapers." But another conferee observed: "We come across as a high and mighty profession. We do not come across as what we are, folks who entered journalism to perform a genuine public service." The image-makers have an image problem.

Almost no one, apart from Reed Irvine, is willing to take on the media, perhaps because they are too powerful. Remember Richard Nixon? He was

LIBERAL ARTS

Not Kosher

Canaan Banana, the Rev. President of Zimbabwe, is back in the news. Readers of *Chronicles* will remember Rev. Banana's efforts to liven up the Anglican Church with a few Zimbabwan ceremonies, i.e., voodoo. The Archbishop of Canterbury didn't seem to mind, but now he's gone too far.

At a dinner party given to honor the visiting President of Iran, Ali Khamenei (also a reverend), Mr. Banana invited not only his wife and a woman cabinet minister (both unveiled) but also a pack of journalists. *The Economist*, in defending the honor of its former colony, insists that "there is no prohibition in the Koran against eating with journalists." That may be true, but it doesn't take a mullah to know the Moslem view of an animal that "parts the hoof but does not chew the cud." cc

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the last President who tried a direct confrontation. In the present context, attacking Dan Rather makes as much sense as writing an exposé on the Five Families: Your career ends up wearing a cement overcoat. Conservative journalists do attack the media bias in the press but do not generally engage in wholesale denunciations of First Amendment privileges. They are, after all, journalists.

Despite the lack of serious criticism, public disenchantment will probably increase. In one sense, this is unfortunate. It is regrettable any time national institutions become alienated from Middle America. On the other hand, the rage against the media is a reason for hope: it means that average Americans have not yet surrendered to the press lords so eager to tell us how to think and feel and vote. It means we value civil order and lawfulness enough to resent those who put the privileges of their order above the law. Four centuries ago when Henry VIII seized the monasteries and Church lands, many Englishmen rejoiced at the seizure because of the abuses long endured as a matter of "rights of clergy." If CBS, the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, and all the other privileged media institutions are not quicker to learn some humility, they may one day confront a ban on newsmen that extends far beyond Grenada.

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On "Still in Saigon—in My Mind"

Regarding "Still in Saigon—in My Mind" (*Chronicles*, December 1985) anyone who is standing up to cheer Rambo deserves to be taken for another ride; perhaps to Central America. Stallone is a multimillionaire who avoided the draft and thinks of American Foreign Policy in comic-book terms; similar to the President, who also avoided any real military action. *Rambo* is garbage, an insult to the pain and suffering of real soldiers who really bled and really died. Only little boys stand up to cheer this mess of a movie.

If we want anyone to fight anywhere for America, then we must have the decency to tell them the truth. Poor people and patriots fight for America; the rest of us will go to college or, if old enough, send our children to college.

We were right to be in Vietnam but afraid to say so and to follow through with the destruction necessary for a victory. We all know the rest of the story: Jane Fonda won and moved on to leg warmers and a flat stomach. "Rambo" was in Europe teaching rich girls how to exercise—that was his contribution to the war effort. Boys went to Vietnam and became part of the body count. Today's tough-talking conservatives and movie heroes all avoided actual combat experience. If you want to cheer, be my guest. Next time, I plan to stand behind a tree with a sword and yell CHARGE!

Tom Sullivan
Rochester, New York

On "Waiting for the End"

The elite (as you say in your "Perspective," October 1985) may, as you properly put it, "fall in with the first utopian movement that presents itself," because of their hatred for the United States. I think, however, that you didn't carry your argument out far enough. Utopians spring forth all over the world, each proclaiming basically the same things, as a result of a hatred of *humanity*. Replace "United States" and "Western civilization" in the Scott Nearing quote with "men" and "humanity" and you get the formula for utopianism. (This replacement also gives the word "perforce" its proper context.)

Man, say the utopians, is a carnivore; he is divided into sexes, each with its own particular characteristics; he prefers certain social and political arrangements to others; he has a violent and self-defeating nature, which must often be controlled from without and within; he is both emotional and rational; and he is ultimately fallible. Pick one or pick all, you won't find a social reformer, Marxist or John Lennon, who doesn't despise at least one of these characteristics.

This puts utopians, of whatever stripe, in the same position as Nearing's emissary in precapitalist Africa. They are "in humanity," but because of their special insight into its awful reality, they are not "of humanity." They are the ones charged with the burden of guiding the wretched race to enlightenment and fulfillment. They are the ones who are willing to sell out their own country for the sake of "a foreign ideology." This makes them, then, traitors wherever they are found. It is a small step from the hatred of X to the affirmation of its opposite.

John W. Merline
Washington, DC

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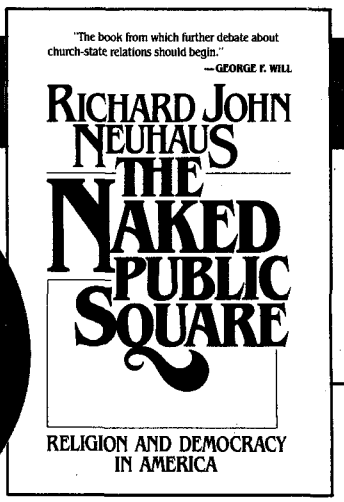
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